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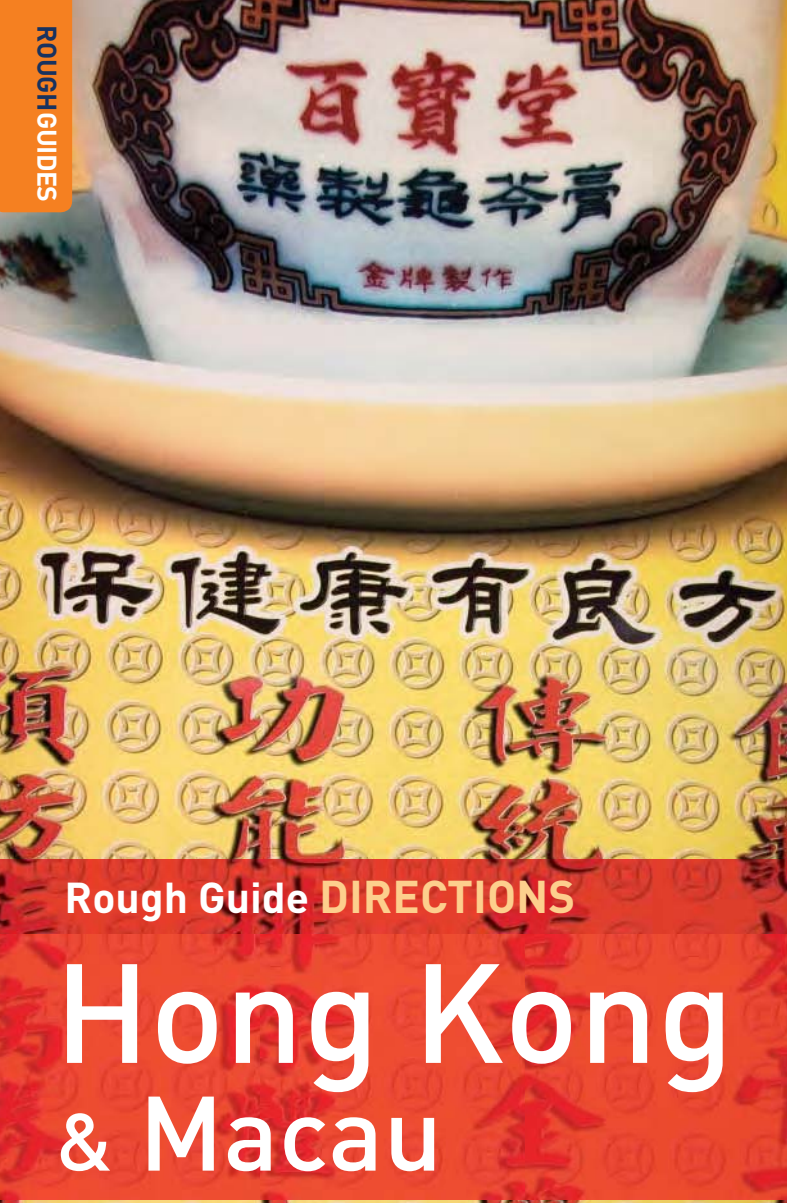

Rough Guide DIRECTIONS

Hong Kong & Macau

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Hong Kong & Macau

DIRECTIONS

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Introduction to

Hong Kong and Macau

Facing each other across the Pearl River estuary, Hong Kong and Macau offer the visitor an exciting yet easy entry into the Chinese world. Colonies of Britain and Portugal respectively until they were returned to mainland China in the 1990s as Special Administrative Regions (SARs), today they seek to establish fresh identities for themselves. While evidence of their colonial past lingers in buildings, languages, food and hi-tech infrastructure, the essentially Chinese heritage underpinning it all is becoming increasingly apparent.

Hong Kong's famously futuristic architecture has long set the standard for similar cityscapes rearing up all over Asia, yet its signature harbourside skyline is still the most strikingly beautiful of its kind. There's also a broad mix of architectural styles here, encompassing Central's soaring IFC2 tower, Mong Kok's ramshackle town-housing, traditional clan

▲ Incense spirals, Man Mo Temple, Hollywood Road

When to visit

Hong Kong and Macau are **subtropical**, which means generally humid conditions through the year. From December to February is the coolest period (16ºC), though usually dry; temperatures rise from March through to May (23ºC) and rainfall increases; while from June until September the weather is steaming hot and extremely wet (29ºC), often with fearsome **typhoons** (from the Chinese *tai fung* – "big wind"), whose storms affect sea traffic. Tourist levels are pretty even year-round, though it's best to book in advance during June's dragon boat races, and Chinese New Year in January or February.

villages in the New Territories and the centuries-old temples which are dotted around. The accompanying markets and streetlife are compellingly frenetic, while the shopping – though no longer a bargain – offers the chance to directly compare a vast range of products sold everywhere from open-air stalls to hi-tech malls. Hong Kong is also one of the best places in the world to eat Cantonese food, while the territory's Western influence means there's a plentiful selection of bars and nightspots. Surprisingly, Hong Kong's outlying areas remain fairly undeveloped, with a countryside encompassing beaches, rugged hills, wild coastline and islands – although none of it especially remote – where you can escape the pace and claustrophobia of the downtown areas. Hong Kong's only real downside is that the overwhelming commercialism and consumption make it hard to engage with the underlying Chinese culture – though you can glimpse it at Happy Valley's horseraces, Mong Kok's Bird Market or simply by watching early-morning *tai chi* practitioners going through their routines in Kowloon Park. Cultural barriers also drop at the several annual Chinese festivals sprinkling the calendar – Chinese New Year, the Dragon Boat Races and Cheung Chau

▼ Approach to the Ten Thousand Buddhas Monastery, Sha Tin

▼ Trinket shop, Wan Chai

Bun Festival are the liveliest – when even visitors will find it hard not to become caught up in the action.

Smaller and more visually attractive than its neighbour, Macau is also ethnically Chinese, but while all the temples and festivals of southern China are reproduced here, they're not the main reason for a visit. Instead, Macau's charm rests on a substantial quantity of old Portuguese churches, forts and streets, which lend the place a laid-back, colonial-tropical ambiance. Macau's tiny scale also means you can see just about everything on an easy day-trip from Hong Kong, while its superb food marries Portuguese, Chinese, Goan, Brazilian and African influences, all washed down with Portuguese port and brandy. As far as the Chinese are concerned, however, Macau's main appeal is in its many casinos – the only place on Chinese territory where they are legal – which draw in swarms of punters from Hong Kong and mainland China.

▲ Fish market, Lantau

Hong Kong and Macau
AT A GLANCE

▲ Tram, Wan Chai

Hong Kong Island

From Central's bars, restaurants and waterfront skyscrapers, to views from the Peak, smoky temples, cruises around Aberdeen harbour and relaxing on Shek O beach, Hong Kong Island keeps you entertained day and night.

Kowloon

Shopping is king in Kowloon: Nathan Road's stores stock the latest model of every conceivable electronic gadget, from mobile phones to cameras and computers, while specialist markets trade in jade, songbirds, goldfish and clothes.

New Territories

Studded with a handful of modern, functional New Towns, the New Territories also hide a few traditional settlements and a surprising wealth of wild countryside, hiking trails and beautiful scenery.

▼ One Peking Road, Kowloon

▲ Boats, Cheung Chau harbour

Other islands

Easy walking trails to rocky headlands and tiny beaches are the main attractions of the small, laid-back islands of Cheung Chau, Peng Chau and Lamma – along with some excellent restaurants specializing in fresh seafood.

Macau

An easy day-trip from Hong Kong, with an elegant quarter of old Portuguese churches, squares and houses, and plenty of restaurants serving unique Macanese food – plus a host of crowded, noisy casinos.

▲ Largo do Senado, Macau

▲ Man on bike, Tai O, Lantau

Lantau

Hong Kong's largest island offers plenty of outdoor escapes, along with a Disneyland, the unusual fishing village of Tai O and one of the world's largest Buddha statues.

Ideas

The big six sights

Hong Kong and Macau are superb places to soak up atmosphere as you wander, but there's also a handful of key sights which form the core of most tourist itineraries. Whether it's close-ups of modern architecture, sweeping views, iconic religious monuments or simply sunbathing on a sandy beach, Hong Kong and Macau have something to offer at every turn.

▲ São Paulo facade

Macau's most famous colonial Portuguese building, though only the intricately carved stonework shell survived a fire in 1835.

P.136 ▸ MACAU

▲ Big Buddha at Po Lin

Religion writ large at this huge bronze statue, which sits serenely between Lantau's peaks.

P.126 ▸ LANTAU

▲ Harbour at night

Central's futuristic skyline is one of the world's great cityscapes, especially when lit up at night.

P.54 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▼ Star Ferry

This evocative ride across Victoria Harbour allows water-level views of shipping activity, framed by Central's hi-tech towers.

P.51 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▲ Shek O beach

One of the nicest stretches of sand in Hong Kong, overlooked by a beautiful granite headland.

P.90 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: THE SOUTH SIDE AND EAST COAST

▼ View from the Peak

Almost all of Hong Kong is visible from Victoria Peak, with a staggering view north across the harbour, Kowloon and into the New Territories.

P.59 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

Restaurants

Many of Hong Kong and Macau's restaurants have an atmosphere every bit as good as their food, whether they are formal Chinese or Macanese institutions, one of the many establishments specializing in foreign cuisines, street stalls with basic but expertly cooked snacks, or tiny cafés whose modest furnishings completely bely their huge reputations.

▲ Macanese restaurants

One of the perks of a trip to Macau is the chance to eat at one of the many restaurants serving seafood in the Macanese manner

P.144 ▸ MACAU

▲ The Chippy

The British may have relinquished Hong Kong, but their culinary influence remains in nostalgic servings of battered cod 'n' chips at *The Chippy*.

P.61 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

▲ Yung Kee

Smart but not especially formal Cantonese restaurant in Central, famous for its roast meats – especially the crispy-skinned goose.

P.62 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▲ Lord Stowe's Bakery

This humble, open-fronted bakery in Macau's quiet Coloane Village produces beautifully fragrant Portuguese baked custard tarts.

P.145 ▸ MACAU

▼ Lin Heung Lau Teahouse

The Chinese describe good restaurants as being "hot and noisy", and you won't find a better example than this legendary teahouse in Sheung Wan.

P.72 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

▼ Jumbo Floating Restaurant

As gaudy as a fairground, this shamelessly pretentious, multi-level restaurant serves only average food but provides an unforgettable dining experience.

P.90 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: THE SOUTH SIDE AND EAST COAST

Day-Trips

If Hong Kong's downtown areas become too claustrophobic, there are plenty of day-trips possible, out to where mountains, rugged coastlines and beaches predominate: you might even come across a few rare animals and birds. Hong Kong also boasts two theme parks, easily reached on public transport.

▲ Disneyland

The local mouse franchise, populated by a familiar cast of cartoon characters; the host of attractions includes a gripping roller-coaster ride in the pitch dark.

P.123 ▸ LANTAU

▲ Beaches

Both SARs sport excellent beaches – including Silvermine at Mui Wo on Hong Kong's Lantau, and Macau's Hác Sá – though polluted water means that these are better for sunbathing than swimming.

P.121 ▸ LANTAU
P.144 ▸ MACAU

▲ Wetlands Park

This spread of marshland in the New Territories, facing the Chinese mainland, is a stopover for many species of migratory wildfowl.

P.117 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES

▼ Ocean Park

Hong Kong's first theme park, complete with pandas, marine aquarium and terrifying rollercoaster.

P.85 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: THE SOUTH SIDE AND EAST COAST

▲ Pink dolphins

Take a boat out to look for these rare creatures, of which only 180 survive in the waters around Hong Kong.

P.124 ▸ LANTAU

▲ Boat trips

Taking a boat – whether across Hong Kong harbour, on a tour out from Aberdeen, or ferries to the outer islands or Macau – gives an insight into the maritime trade that built Hong Kong's wealth.

P.51 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK
P.85 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: THE SOUTH SIDE AND EAST COAST
P.127, 129 & 131 ▸ OTHER ISLANDS
P.134 ▸ MACAU

Colonial Macau

Macau has a quarter of European architecture dating back several hundred years to the heydey of Portuguese occupation, comprising flagstoned squares, stone forts, graceful churches, brightly painted military bases and bustling markets, all standing in strange contrast to the largely Chinese population.

▼ São Francisco barracks

Nineteenth-century military headquarters, whose classical exterior is painted an unlikely violent pink.

P.142 ▸ MACAU

▼ Largo do Senado

Old Macau's still-cobbled main square, fronted on all sides by antique Portuguese-style colonnaded shops, churches and government buildings.

P.133 ▸ MACAU

▲ Fortaleza do Monte

A hilltop fort whose solid stone battlements lined with bronze cannons were originally built to fight off the Dutch, and now house a historical museum.

P.137 ▸ MACAU

▲ Leal Senado

Macau's original Senate House, with a splendid wood-panelled Chamber still used by the local government.

P.134 ▸ MACAU

▼ São Domingos

Well-proportioned seventeenth-century Baroque church painted in restrained pastel colours, housing a famous statue of the Virgin and Child.

P.136 ▸ MACAU

▼ Rua da Felicidade

One of Macau's last nineteenth-century streets preserved intact, and lined with wooden-shuttered shops and restaurants.

P.139 ▸ MACAU

Temples

Temples are an integral part of Chinese life, even in such modern places as Hong Kong and Macau. A wealth of Buddhist and Taoist deities are worshipped here (sometimes side by side in the same temple), and though the buildings themselves are mostly built of stone along similar, fairly spartan lines, they're usually lively places with red and gold decorations, a host of statues, huge incense coils hanging from the roof and forecourts thick with fortune tellers.

▲ Ten Thousand Buddhas Monastery

The most interesting of Hong Kong's few Buddhist temples, with a host of grotesque sculptures and thousands of Buddha statuettes.

P.114 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES

▼ Tin Hau

There are temples all over Hong Kong dedicated to this local deity of fishermen and sailors – the best are at Stanley and Clearwater Bay.

P.89 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: THE SOUTH SIDE AND EAST COAST
P.119 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES

◀ Man Mo

Busy shrine in downtown Hong Kong to the complementary Taoist gods of literature and war; it's smoky and hung with slow-burning incense coils.

P.69 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

▶ A-Ma

Macau's main complex for worshipping the Protector of Fishermen and Sailors, a small slope crammed with tiny temples and boulders painted with religious symbols.

P.140 ▸ MACAU

▼ Wong Tai Sin

Hong Kong's most popular temple, its forecourt crammed with people praying for luck and having their fortunes told.

P.109 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES

▲ Kun Iam

Aside from being an important shrine to the Buddhist Goddess of Mercy, this temple in Macau is where the first Sino-US treaty was signed in 1844.

P.139 ▸ MACAU

Festivals

The Chinese lunar calendar is peppered with festivals, some originating thousands of years ago. They are always noisy, busy events, and a hugely sociable atmosphere is guaranteed by the crowds coming to watch or participate, along with the accompanying noise, colour and lights – all of which are said to chase away bad luck and ensure a successful event. The biggest and best-known is Chinese New Year (Spring Festival), but smaller events include a few unique to the area.

▲ Mid-Autumn Festival

Celebrates both the harvest and a fourteenth-century uprising by the Chinese against their Mongol overlords, when heavy moulded cakes stuffed with sweet bean paste are eaten all over Hong Kong.

P.166 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▲ Lantern Festival

The two-week-long Chinese New Year celebrations end with decorative paper lantern displays of all colours, shapes and sizes in parks across the region.

P.165 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▲ Fireworks at Chinese New Year

Hong Kong and Macau usher in the Chinese New Year with brilliantly intense, deafening fireworks displays – Hong Kong's in particular is like spending forty minutes in the middle of a war zone.

P.165 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▼ Dragon Boat Races

A Chinese tradition dating back over two thousand years, when teams of narrow-hulled, dragon-headed boats race to commemorate the drowning of the famous statesman Chu Yuen in the third century BC.

P.166 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▲ Tai Chiu Bun Festival

A week-long extravaganza on Cheung Chau island (in April or May), featuring outdoor Chinese theatre, dragon dances, stilt walking and twenty-metre-high towers made of steamed buns.

P.165 ▸ ESSENTIALS

Shopping

Hong Kong's markets, malls and boutiques provide one of the world's most intense shopping experiences. The best deals are on clothing, jewellery and pirated gear, while the sheer range of mobile phones and electronic goods is staggering – even if prices are not that wonderful, there's nowhere else in the world you can directly compare so many brands. It's also a good place to look for Chinese art, both ancient and modern.

▲ Jewellery

The Chinese appreciate gold and precious stones, and locally made jewellery – such as that sold at Chow Tai Fook – is of high quality and moderate price.

P.99 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI

▲ Clothes

Hong Kong's home-brand clothing labels are excellent value, as are made-to-order suits; fashion-wear by designer stores such as Shanghai Tang is expensive but elegant.

P.60 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▸ Pirated gear

Hong Kong is a hotbed of pirated DVDs and computer software, often sold openly in downtown stores.

P.104 ▸ KOWLOON: YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK

▾ Hi tech

Electronics stores in Tsim Sha Tsui and Mong Kok offer an extraordinary range of the latest photo gear, MP3 players, mobile phones and computers.

P.99 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI
P.104 ▸ KOWLOON: YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK

▴ Antiques

Shops specializing in Chinese antiques and reproductions line Hollywood Road, in Hong Kong Island's Mid-Levels.

P.71 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

Food and drink

The Chinese use eating and drinking as a way of cementing social relationships, meaning that meals in Hong Kong and Macau are always memorable. Cantonese is the local Chinese style, specializing in fresh, lightly cooked foods and *yum cha* breakfasts accompanied by a pot of tea. Macanese cooking blends Chinese and colonial Portuguese flavours, and meals are washed down with a coffee or bottle of wine. For those in a rush, there are plenty of places to enjoy a quick bowl of soup.

▲ Yum cha

Try this classic Cantonese breakfast (also known as *dim sum*) at the *Luk Yu* or *Tao Heung* teahouses, where a host of small sweet and savoury dumplings are accompanied by a pot of fragrant tea.

P.61 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK
P.102 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI

▲ Macanese

Restaurants such as *Fat Siu Lau* provide mammoth portions of Macau's unique dishes, including "African Chicken", cod and *feijoada* (bean and sausage stew).

P.144 ▸ MACAU

▲ Vegetarian

Chinese cuisine has spawned a sophisticated vegetarian offshoot, served in Buddhist temples, Hong Kong's *Light Vegetarian* and Macau's *Macau Vegetarian Farm*, featuring imitation meat dishes made from gluten and tofu.

P.101 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI
P.145 ▸ MACAU

▼ Cantonese

The local Chinese cooking style demands the freshest possible ingredients and excels in teasing out their essential tastes and textures through stir-frying, roasting and steaming – best experienced at restaurants like *Yung Kee*.

P.62 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▼ Street food

Some of the tastiest Cantonese food is found at stalls and canteens serving simple street dishes such as wuntun noodles or fishball soup – try Hong Kong's *Tsui Wah* restaurant.

P.62 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

Health

The Chinese obsession with health goes back several thousand years to the semi-mythical "Yellow Emperor", who compiled an encyclopedia of medicinal plants and their uses. Since then, a complex medical system has evolved which uses herbs, acupuncture, exercise and symbolic objects to nurture and balance the body's *qi*, a form of intrinsic energy that the Chinese believe is the source of life.

▲ Tai chi

Head to the parks in the early morning to see mostly elderly practitioners going through their slow *tai chi* routines, said to maintain health and flexibility.

P.96 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI

▲ Medicinal tea

Called "bitter tea" in Chinese, astringent brews made from medicinal herbs designed to fight off colds are sold from special urns – you'll see them in Sheung Wan.

P.68 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

▲ Symbols

The Chinese have all sorts of symbols for luck, health and longevity, which are prominently displayed on packaging, temples (such as at Wong Tai Sin) and homes.

P.109 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES

▲ Jade

This hard green stone is believed by the Chinese to prevent ageing and decay; there's even a Hong Kong market dedicated to it.

P.106 ▸ KOWLOON: YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK

Wealth

Hong Kong's very existence is based on finance and business, and today some of the city's most striking modern architecture houses the headquarters of financial institutions. Traditionally too, wealth has always been deemed important; the Chinese burn symbols of wealth to enrich the afterlives of their ancestors at funerals and festivals, and even have a god of wealth.

▲ Bank of China tower

China's national bank building in Hong Kong forms a striking, knife-like profile against the sky – even though this offends the laws of *feng shui*.

P.56 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▲ Spirit offerings

Local Chinese burn paper models of gold bars, cars and even houses to ensure that their ancestors are well cared for in the afterlife – you can see this at Hong Kong's Pak Tai temple.

P.75 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: WAN CHAI, CAUSEWAY BAY AND HAPPY VALLEY

▲ God of Wealth

Many local businesses sport a small shrine somewhere to Choi Sin, the God of Wealth, to make him feel welcome and so attract his patronage – have a look in traditional businesses in Sheung Wan.

P.67 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

▼ IFC2 tower

Hong Kong's tallest tower overlooks the harbourfront, and is immensely impressive when the top disappears into low cloud.

P.54 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▼ HSBC headquarters

Hong Kong's own bank is housed in an amazing building that is actually raised off the ground and partially hollow.

P.56 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

Hong Kong islands

Hong Kong's islands offer an easy escape from downtown claustrophobia: there are laid-back fishing villages and markets on Cheung Chau and Peng Chau, while Lantau has great hiking trails, seascapes, beaches, and even a cable-car ride from Tung Chung up to Po Lin Monastery on Lantau Peak.

▲ Peng Chau

A tiny, horseshoe-shaped island with low-key village streets and just one walking track, culminating in fabulous views.

P.131 ▸ OTHER ISLANDS

▲ Lamma

Small, mostly rural island with quiet accommodation, easy walks, and renowned seafood restaurants.

P.127 ▸ OTHER ISLANDS

◀ Cheung Chau

Once a thriving pirate community, now better known for its laid-back beach and busy market, harbour and temples.

P.129 ▸ OTHER ISLANDS

▼ Lantau

Hong Kong's largest, most rugged island with isolated fishing villages, steep peaks and the famous Po Lin Buddhist Monastery.

P.121 ▸ LANTAU

Recreation

One of the most popular forms of entertainment in Hong Kong and Macau is gambling, either at one of Macau's casinos, or at horse races in Hong Kong. For more in the way of local culture, there's also a limited amount of traditional Cantonese opera and a huge domestic film industry, while those after a bit of exertion can head to Hong Kong's wilds for rock-climbing or hiking.

▲ Cantonese opera

Although no longer a widespread form of entertainment, traditional Cantonese opera is still performed at some festivals, street markets and occasionally at big venues.

P.164 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▲ Casinos

Macau is the only place in China where casinos are legal, and the city's many gaming halls range from the glitzy to the decidedly downmarket.

P.141 ▸ MACAU

▲ Hong Kong cinema

Despite its small size, Hong Kong has the world's third-largest film industry, with cinemas everywhere and major new releases almost every week.

P.164 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▲ Horse racing

Join the crowds of eager, hard-bitten punters for a night at Hong Kong's weekly horse races.

P.78 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: WAN CHAI, CAUSEWAY BAY AND HAPPY VALLEY
P.114 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES

▲ Rock-climbing

Probably the best spot for this fast-growing sport is Lion Rock in Hong Kong's New Territories.

P.112 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES

◂ Hiking trails

Hong Kong's islands and New Territories are covered in a network of hiking paths, allowing access to some unexpectedly wild coastlines and hills.

P.110 & 118 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES
P.127–131 ▸ OTHER ISLANDS

Markets

Local markets are some of the best places to see the Chinese going about everyday life, besides offering the opportunity to snap up a bargain. Temple Street Night Market is loaded with souvenirs, while the Bird and Goldfish markets are far more traditional in feel, full of elderly Chinese looking for a pet. If your stomach is up to it, seafood and produce markets are busy, lively affairs, catering to the demands of local cuisine with only the freshest of ingredients

▲ Temple Street Night Market

Hong Kong's most famous tourist market is a good place to pick up a souvenir, see street performers, and have an inexpensive meal.

P.104 ▸ KOWLOON: YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK

▲ Jade Market

All sorts of things, from small pendants to bangles and figurines, are carved out of this hard, semi-precious and – in Chinese lore – youth-preserving stone.

P.106 ▸ KOWLOON: YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK

▼ Goldfish Market

Thousands of bug-eyed goldfish are hung outside shops in plastic bags – the Chinese buy them to attract wealth.

P.107 ▸ KOWLOON: YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK

▼ Bird Market

Elderly Chinese men gather here to compare their songbirds, buy elegant wooden cages, and just chat and stroll.

P.108 ▸ KOWLOON: YAU MA TEI AND MONG KOK

▲ Seafood Market

Head to the Aberdeen waterside to see the daily catch that goes towards creating some of Cantonese cuisine's greatest dishes.

P.85 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: THE SOUTH SIDE AND EAST COAST

▲ Produce Market

Witness the Chinese seeking to satisfy their demand for absolutely fresh ingredients, whether vegetable or animal – Sheung Wan's is one of the best.

P.67 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

Museums

Hong Kong and Macau have some excellent museums illustrating local history and culture, ranging from high-quality collections of Chinese art, to reconstructions of old streets, European gun batteries, traditional wooden boats and even whole villages.

▲ Museum of Coastal Defence

Nineteenth-century British gun emplacements protecting the eastern end of Hong Kong harbour, now a display of military history.

P.89 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: THE SOUTH SIDE AND EAST COAST

▲ Museu Marítimo

Lively museum in Macau, with scores of lovingly built scale models of wooden fishing vessels.

P.140 ▸ MACAU

◀ Museum of Art

Provides a solid introduction to traditional Chinese painting, calligraphy, pottery and metalworking, with rotating exhibitions of contemporary art.

P.95 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI

▼ Museum of History

Fun recreation of Hong Kong's past, with whole streets reconstructed amidst more usual glass cases of historical artefacts.

P.98 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI

Bars and clubs

Whilst a night on the town is hardly a Chinese institution, Hong Kong's European heritage means that it enjoys a solid nightlife based around an ever-changing core of bars and clubs on Hong Kong Island and in Tsim Sha Tsui, where you can drink, dance or listen to live music from dusk till dawn.

▲ Old China Hand

The premier refuge for hard-core drinkers and seedy, embittered expats.

P.83 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: WAN CHAI, CAUSEWAY BAY AND HAPPY VALLEY

▲ Lan Kwai Fong

The heart of Hong Kong's club and bar scene – a score of riotous dens provide booze and music until the small hours.

P.63 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

◂ C Bar

Tiny Lan Kwai Fong bar, which makes up in volume and atmosphere what it lacks in size.

P.63 ▸ CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▾ Dinamoe Hum

Minuscule but lively jazz club, which often hosts foreign bands.

P.73 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

▴ Ned Kelly's Last Stand

A Hong Kong institution, with live jazz and hearty food.

P.102 ▸ KOWLOON:TSIM SHA TSUI

Parks

Formal parks are a feature of many Chinese cities: there are several excellent open spaces in both Hong Kong and Macau, from the paving and neat flower beds of Kowloon and Victoria parks, to Hong Kong Park's fantastic aviary and city views, and Macau's wholly traditional Jardim Lou Lim Ieoc, built in the classical Chinese style.

▲ Hong Kong Park

Hilly parkland with outstanding aviary and ubiquitous wedding groups.

P.58 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▲ Kowloon Park

Oasis of paving, ponds, trees and caged birds in bustling Tsim Sha Tsui.

P.96 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI

▶ Jardim Lou Lim Ieoc

A traditional Chinese garden in Macau, packed with trees, pavilions and strangely shaped rocks.

P.138 ▸ MACAU

▼ Victoria Park

The best place in Hong Kong to watch early-morning martial arts, or find a patch of shade in the midday heat.

P.77 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: WAN CHAI, CAUSEWAY BAY AND HAPPY VALLEY

On the move

One of the wonders of Hong Kong is that in such a crowded and busy place, the public transport system works so well. This includes such archaic vehicles as Hong Kong Island's trams, British-inspired double-decker buses and 1950s-style cross-harbour ferries, as well as the speedy and hi-tech MTR underground rail system.

▲ Double-decker buses

Hong Kong's British heritage is betrayed in these buses, of most use for trips to the countryside.

P.161 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▲ MTR

Hong Kong's efficient underground rail system handles hundreds of thousands of passengers daily.

P.161 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▲ Peak Tram

Enjoy being hauled up through the forest covering Victoria Peak's steep sides, on this old-style funicular railway.

P.60 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▼ Ferries

An essential part of any visit to Hong Kong and Macau is the chance to view them from the water.

P.162 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▲ Taxis

So popular in downtown areas of Hong Kong that they're considered by many as an extension of the public transport system.

P.162 ▸ ESSENTIALS

▼ Trams

These strangely anachronistic vehicles still run for kilometres between the skyscrapers lining Hong Kong Island's north shore.

P.161 ▸ ESSENTIALS

Colonial Hong Kong

Hong Kong's colonial heritage is far less visible than Macau's, but a few quaint (and baffling) traditions such as afternoon tea and firing the Noon Day Gun survive, along with several period buildings and monuments that have somehow avoided demolition and now sit isolated amongst the city's futuristic high-rises.

▲ Clocktower

All that remains of the former trans-continental train station, where passengers from Europe once disembarked.

P.92 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI

▲ Flagstaff House

Fine Victorian building now housing a collection of Chinese teaware.

P.59 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▲ LEGCO building

Former assembly hall for the Hong Kong Legislative Council; one of downtown Central's last old buildings.

P.55 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: CENTRAL AND THE PEAK

▼ Tea at the Peninsula

Classic English afternoon tea is served in the lobby of Hong Kong's most opulent hotel.

P.94 ▸ KOWLOON: TSIM SHA TSUI

▼ Noon Day Gun

This nineteenth-century relic is fired daily at noon.

P.76 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: WAN CHAI, CAUSEWAY BAY AND HAPPY VALLEY

Traditional Hong Kong

Although the pervading futuristic architecture masks what little of traditional Hong Kong remains, the older days linger in the way people act, what they eat and (occasionally) in the layout of a few villages and hamlets dotted across the SAR.

▲ Old streets

Lanes such as Pottinger Street still retain their original steep flights of stone steps.

P.57 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

▲ Reading the future

At temples such as Wong Tai Sin you'll see people shaking canisters of "fortune sticks" to see what the future might hold for them.

P.109 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES

▲ Tsang Tai Uk

This fortress-like village was built in the 1870s, and retains many traditional features, despite being hemmed in by modern towers.

P.113 ▸ THE NEW TERRITORIES

▼ Traditional shops

Businesses in Sheung Wan still specialize in items such as bird's nest, sea slug and ginseng.

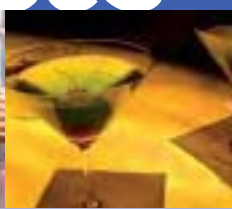
P.67 ▸ HONG KONG ISLAND: MID-LEVELS AND WESTERN

▼ Tai O

Fishing village on Lantau with half the houses built on stilts over the water.

P.125 ▸ LANTAU

Places



名家九
鮮明熟
歡迎

Hong Kong Island: Central and the Peak

Set on the north side of Hong Kong Island, Central is where the city coalesced after the territory was seized by the British in 1841. Businesses blossomed between enormous Victoria Harbour and the steep lower slopes of the Peak, a narrow strip which today has become the world's most expensive piece of real estate. With so little room, the mass of concrete and glass has had no choice but to evolve upwards, creating a backdrop of competitively tall towers interconnected by a web of elevated walkways.

Central's atmosphere is contemporary and upmarket: the SAR's banks all have their headquarters here, shopping opportunities are for high-end clothing and jewellery labels, and many of its clubs, bars and restaurants are important places to be seen. For a contrast to this otherwise overwhelming modernity, you can seek out a few colonial buildings or unwind in Hong Kong Park, whilst a trip up the Peak offers superlative views of the city and a real break from street-level claustrophobia.

The Star Ferry

Daily 6.30am–11.30pm, every 6–12 min. Lower deck $1.70, air-conditioned upper deck $2.20. By far the best way to arrive in Central is by riding the Star Ferry over from Tsim Sha Tsui: the sight of Central's skyscrapers, framed by the hills and looming up as the ferry makes its seven-minute crossing of busy Victoria Harbour, is one

▼ THE STAR FERRY

CENTRAL & THE PEAK
0
100 m
PIER ROAD
FINANCE STREET
IFC2 Tower
GILMAN STREET
CONNAUGHT ROAD CENTRAL
CENTRAL
Airport Express & Hong Kong MTR Station
The Centre
HARBOUR VIEW STREET
IFC Mall
JUBILEE ST
Central Market
QUEEN VICTORIA ST
DES VOEUX ROAD CENTRAL
Exchange Square
Central Bus Terminal
CONNAUGHT PLACE
QUEEN'S ROAD
LI YUEN ST WEST
LI YUEN ST EAST
DOUGLAS ST
STANLEY STREET
WELLINGTON STREET
POTTINGER STREET
THEATRE LANE
Central MTR
PEDDER STREET
WO ON LANE
D'AGUILAR STREET
WING WAH LANE
WYNDHAM STREET
The Landmark
CHATER ROAD
STATUE SQUARE
LEGCO Building
JACKSON ST
ICE HOUSE STREET
Standard Chartered
HSBC
BANK ST
Old Bank of China
QUEEN'S ROAD
WYNDHAM ST
LAN KWAI FONG
Old Dairy Farm Building
ICE HOUSE STREET
ARBUTHNOT ROAD
GLENEALY STREET
LOWER ALBERT ROAD
UPPER ALBERT ROAD
Government House
Zoological & Botanical Gardens
ALBANY ROAD
GARDEN ROAD
Peak Tram Terminal

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Bus Terminal
Victoria Harbour
Star Ferry Pier
Queen's Pier
N
EDINBURGH PLACE
Hong Kong Club
Chater Garden
MURRAY ROAD
LAMBETH WALK
TIM WAH AVENUE
TIM MEI AVENUE
Lippo Centre
ADMIRALTY
Tower 1
HARCOURT ROAD
Admiralty Centre
QUEENSWAY
Bank of China
TAMAR ST
DRAKE STREET
RODNEY STREET
Admiralty MTR
COTTON TREE DRIVE
Hong Kong Park
Flagstaff House

Victoria Harbour

Central is the best place from which to ponder Hong Kong's magnificent **Victoria Harbour**, from whose Cantonese label (*Heung Gang* or Fragrant Harbour) the entire SAR takes its name. This safe haven for shipping was what attracted the British in the first place, and after the colony became established, international trading concerns – which depended entirely on maritime transport – were naturally attracted here. Today, Hong Kong's money-making enterprises have shifted into Central's towers, and the harbour is shrinking as land is reclaimed in order to build still more skyscrapers: at 1km across, the harbour is half as wide as in 1840. This narrowing has drastically reduced the harbour's ability to flush itself clean and its water is dangerously polluted: 1.5 million cubic litres of untreated sewage are discharged here daily, and new sewage treatment facilities await completion.

Despite this, it's still difficult to beat the thrill of crossing the harbour by boat; alternatively, you can walk along Central's landscaped waterfront for a view of the maritime activity that originally made Hong Kong great – junks, ferries, motorboats, container ships, cruise liners and sailing boats all pass through. Twenty thousand ocean-going ships sail via the harbour every year, and thousands of smaller boats depart from here on their way to the Pearl River estuary and China.

of the most thrilling images of Hong Kong. The portly vessels have been running since 1898, and the current 1950s-style green-and-cream livery and wooden decks and seating are charmingly anachronistic. This isn't just a tourist sight though – the double-decker boats carry about 100,000 passengers a day, mostly locals, so come prepared for crowds.

IFC2 and Exchange Square

Connaught Rd and Finance St. Just west of the Star Ferry Pier is the **International Finance Centre**, a business and shopping complex overlooking the Outer Islands Ferry Piers;

▼ VICTORIA HARBOUR

the complex's **IFC2 Tower** is currently Hong Kong's tallest structure at 420m high – even higher than the Peak Tram's upper terminus. Home to the Hong Kong Monetary Authority, IFC2's 88 floors are so well proportioned that its height is disguised until you consciously measure it against adjacent structures, or see its upper storeys hidden by cloud.

Inland from the International Finance Centre, and accessible by a raised walkway, are the three pastel-pink, marble and glass towers of Hong Kong's **Stock Exchange**, sprouting from Swiss architect Remo Riva's **Exchange Square**. The adjacent open piazza has sculptures by Henry Moore and Elizabeth Frink, while the interior is entirely computer-operated: the buildings' environment is electronically controlled, and the brokers whisk between floors in state-of-the-art talking elevators.

Statue Square

The pedestrian underpass from the Star Ferry concourse emerges into Statue Square, heart of the late-nineteenth-century colony, though now uncomfortably bisected by Chater Road. The northern segment is bounded to the east by the members-only **Hong Kong Club**, housed inside a modern, bow-fronted tower; this is faced by the **Mandarin Oriental Hotel**, which hides an opulent interior inside a dull, box-like casing.

Across Chater Road in the southern half of Statue Square, the **statue** itself is that of Sir Thomas Jackson, a nineteenth-century manager of the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank. This area is a meeting point for the territory's 200,000 Filipina *amah*s, or maids, who descend en masse on Central each Sunday to sociably picnic, shop, read, sing and have their hair cut.

The most important of Central's surviving colonial buildings sits on the eastern side of Statue Square. Built in 1898, the former Supreme Court (now the **LEGCO building** – home of Hong Kong's Legislative Council), a granite edifice with dome and colonnade, is the only colonial structure left in the square. This is the SAR's nearest equivalent to a parliamentary building, though its locally elected members must be approved by the Chinese authorities in Beijing, and so it hardly constitutes an independent government.

Three banks

Crossing the southern half of Statue Square and the busy Des Voeux Road puts you right underneath Sir Norman Foster's **Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation** (HSBC) headquarters, which

▼ INTERIOR, HSBC

Feng shui

Whatever the scale of a building project, the Chinese consider divination using **feng shui** (literally "wind and water") an essential part of the initial preparations. Reflecting Taoist cosmology, *feng shui* assesses how buildings must be positioned so as not to disturb the spiritual attributes of the surrounding landscape, which in a city naturally includes other buildings. Structures must be favourably orientated according to points on the compass and protected from local "unlucky directions" (features that drain or block the flow of good fortune) by other buildings, walls, hills, mountain ranges or water. It's not difficult to spot smaller manifestations of *feng shui* around buildings in Hong Kong, such as mirrors hung above doors or woks placed outside windows to deflect bad influences. Water features create positive *feng shui* (it is believed that wealth is borne along by the water), hence the price of harbourview real estate; in contrast, the old Government House has very bad *feng shui*: it's cut off from the sea, is overlooked by high buildings, and some of the surrounding skyscrapers are placed so that their corners point towards it – the *feng shui* equivalent of being stabbed.

opened in 1986. The whole battleship-grey building is supported on eight groups of giant pillars and it's possible to walk right under the bank and come out on the other side – a necessity stipulated by the *feng shui* belief that the old centre of power on the island, Government House, should be accessible in a straight line by foot from the Star Ferry. You look up through the glass underbelly into a sixty-metre-high atrium, with floors suspended from coathanger-like structures and linked by long escalators that ride through each storey, and open offices ranged around the central atrium. The public banking facilities are on the first two floors, so you can ride the first couple of escalators from street level to have a look. The bronze lions at the front were saved from the bank's previous incarnation – one is still scarred from World War II shrapnel wounds.

Next door to the HSBC is the headquarters of the **Standard Chartered Bank**, a curiously stepped tower squeezed between opposing blocks that – by design – just overtop the HSBC's building. A more serious conceptual rival to HSBC is I.M. Pei's 315m-high **Bank of China**, across Garden Road to the east. Completed in 1990, Pei's angular, dark-glass building is visually striking and overtowers the HSBC building by 145m, though the knife-like profile pointing skywards offends *feng shui* sensitivities (see above) and the building is disliked by many locals. The **Old Bank of China**, which the new Bank of China Tower superseded, still stands next to the HSBC. A solid stone structure dating from 1950, it's now occupied by another bank and, at the top, the **China Club**, a wealthy members-only haven, reputedly home to some very risqué artworks.

Queen's Road and Des Voeux Road

Queen's Road has been Central's main street since the 1840s, when, prior to land reclamation, it was on the waterfront. Running south from it, just west of HSBC, **Ice House Street** was named

▲ STREET, CENTRAL

after a building that once stored blocks of imported ice for use in the colony's early hospitals; following it uphill brings you onto Lower Albert Road, where the early-twentieth-century **Old Dairy Farm Building**, in brown-and-cream brick, today houses the *Fringe Club* and the *Foreign Correspondents' Club*, a retreat for journalists, diplomats and lawyers.

Running west, Queen's Road and parallel **Des Voeux Road** (with its tramway) take in some of the territory's most exclusive shops and malls. These include **The Landmark** shopping complex, on the corner of Pedder Street and Des Voeux Road, which boasts a fountain in its huge atrium and is a key hub in the **pedestrian walkway** system that links all Central's major buildings.

Whether you follow Queen's Road or Des Voeux Road west from here, look out for the parallel alleys which run between the two, **Li Yuen Street East** and **Li Yuen Street West**; both are packed tight with stalls selling women's clothes, silkwear, children's clothes, fabrics, imitation handbags and accessories. Southwest of these alleys, over Queen's Road, **Pottinger Street**'s steps are similarly clogged with stalls selling ribbons, flowers, locks and other minor items. In contrast, nearby on Queen's Road is **Lane Crawford**, one of the city's top – and most staid – department stores.

Just west of Central Market, at 99 Queen's Road Central, is **The Centre**, designed by architect Denis Lau, and by night one of the most eye-catching features of the island's skyline. The building's horizontal bars of light change colour constantly and perform a dancing light show nightly at 9pm: the best place to view the spectacle is from the Peak or from the Kowloon waterfront.

Lan Kwai Fong

The network of streets south of Queen's Road contains a burgeoning array of trendy pubs, bars, restaurants and clubs, at the heart of which is a sloping L-shaped lane whose name, Lan Kwai Fong, is now used to refer to the whole area. The entertainment kicks off mid-afternoon, with many places remaining open until dawn. Lan Kwai Fong is mostly frequented by expats and Chinese yuppies – a good district to meet young, aspiring locals.

The Zoological and Botanical Gardens

Entrances on Glenealy and Albany roads. Daily 6am–7pm. Free. Perching on the slopes south of Upper Albert Road, overlooking Central, are the low-key Zoological and Botanical

Gardens, which opened in 1864. There's a nice mix of shrubs, trees, and paved paths here, with spectacular close-ups of the upper storeys of the Bank of China Tower and the HSBC, but the main draw is a small aviary, home to cages of rare cranes, songbirds, and all kinds of ducks. West across Albany Road (via an underpass) is a collection of apes, including gibbons and orang-utans, along with one jaguar.

Government House

Upper Albert Rd. Gardens and parts of the house open six times a year; dates announced in the local press. Free. Government House was the residence of Hong Kong's colonial governors from 1855 until the SAR's return to China in 1997. Hong Kong's current Chief Executive, Donald Tsang, has also taken up residence here despite the building's colonial associations and notoriously bad *feng shui*. The house is a strange blend of styles (the turret was added by the Japanese during World War II), and the gardens are notable for their rhododendrons, azaleas and huge fish pond.

Hong Kong Park

Daily 6am–11pm. Free. South from the Bank of China across

▼ EDWARD YOUDE AVIARY

▲ THE PEAK TRAM

Cotton Tree Drive, Hong Kong Park is beautifully landscaped in tiers up the hillside. Amongst the trees and boulders are ornamental lakes and waterfalls stocked with turtles and pelicans, alongside which a continual procession of brides pose for wedding photographs. Specific sights include a **conservatory** with dry and humid habitats for its orchids, cacti and trees, and the superb **Edward Youde Aviary** (daily 9am–5pm; free), designed as an enormous walk-through mesh tent, covering a piece of semi-tropical forest which is home to some eight hundred tropical birds. Despite their bright plumage, these can be surprisingly hard to spot amongst the canopy, even with wooden walkways at branch height. Elsewhere in the park, look for flocks of noisy cockatoos, which are white with yellow crests; escaped pets, they have a habit of damaging trees by ripping off branches and bark.

At the northern corner of Hong Kong Park, the elegantly colonial **Flagstaff House** was built in 1844 as the office and residence of the Commander of the British Forces in Hong Kong. Today, it stands in defiance of the surrounding skyscrapers, its cool white walls, shutters, high ceilings and polished wooden floors the epitome of understated colonial charm. Its survival is down to the donation by one Dr K.S. Lo of his fine collection of traditional Chinese teapots, cups and wooden tea trays, which the SAR authorities have put on display inside Flagstaff House as the **Museum of Teaware** (Mon & Wed–Sun 10am–5pm; free), a suitably refined subject for such a building.

The Lippo Centre

Queensway. The Lippo Centre is an eye-catching, segmented structure of mirrored glass designed by American architect Paul Rudolph. Supported on huge grey pillars, interlocking steel and glass spurs trace their way up the centre's twin hexagonal towers, creating an unmistakeable landmark – though there's nothing of interest inside.

The Peak

The 552-metre heights of the Peak – officially Victoria Peak - give you the only perspective that matters in Hong Kong: down, and over Central and the magnificent harbour. Property

on the Peak, which is clad in woodland and is a popular retreat from the high summer temperatures, has become the prerogative of the colony's elite: residents include politicians, bank CEOs, various consul-generals and assorted celebrities.

The best way to ascend is aboard the **Peak Tram** (daily 7am–midnight, every 10–15 min; $30 return, $20 one-way), a 1.4km-long funicular railway which has been in operation since 1888. The eight-minute ascent tackles 27-degree slopes, forcing you back into your wooden bench as the carriages are steadily hauled through the forest. The ride begins at the terminal on Garden Road and finishes at the **Peak Tower**, an ugly concrete structure generally referred to as the Flying Wok. Its sole virtue is the superb views from the top terrace, which encompass the harbour, Tsim Sha Tsui's land reclamation projects and low-tech concrete tower blocks, right into the New Territories. Further vistas can be savoured across the road, from the upper terrace of the **Peak Galleria**, a touristy shopping complex full of shops and restaurants. It's a panorama that's difficult to tire of – if you can manage it, come up again at night when the lights of Hong Kong transform the city into a glittering box of tricks.

You're not yet at the top of the Peak itself: four roads pan out from the tower, one of which, **Mount Austin Road**, provides a stiff twenty-minute walk up to the landscaped **Victoria Peak Garden**. A **circuit** of the Peak via shady Harlech Road takes around an hour. First views are of Aberdeen and Lamma; as you turn later into Lugard Road, Kowloon and Central eventually come into sight. You can also **walk back to Central** from the Peak Tower in around forty minutes, via a path through the forest which emerges onto Robinson Road near the Zoo.

Shopping

Blanc De Chine

Floor 2, Pedder Building, 12 Pedder St. Elegant and expensive designs loosely based on traditional Chinese clothes, mostly in silk or cashmere.

CRC Department Store

Chiao Shang Building, 92 Queen's Rd. A good supply of Chinese specialities such as medicines, foods, porcelain and handicrafts.

Dymocks

Star Ferry Concourse. Cramped store but very strong on books about Hong Kong and China, from glossy coffee-table works to novels, local maps and hiking guides.

Joyce Boutique

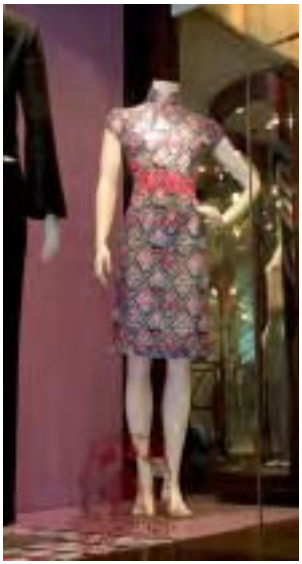
16 Queen's Rd. Hong Kong's most fashionable boutique offers its own range of clothing, as well as many top overseas designer brands.

Lane Crawford

70 Queen's Rd. Hong Kong's oldest Western-style department store, locally dubbed "Hong Kong Harrods" and similarly upmarket. Worth checking for seasonal sales.

Palette Collections Gallery

Floor 5, 23 D'Aguilar St ⓦ www.palettecollections.com. Specialist in upmarket Chinese paintings, porcelain and antique furniture;



▲ SHANGHAI TANG

contact in advance (through website) for viewings.

Shanghai Tang

Ground Floor, Pedder Building, 12 Pedder St. Beautifully done up in 1930s Shanghai style, this store specializes in new versions of traditional Chinese clothing, and they can also make to order. Expensive, though sales are regular and good.

Sun Chau Book and Antique Co.

32 Stanley St ⓦ www.sunchau.com.hk. Quirky shop full of old household bits and pieces such as porcelain, photographs, Cultural Revolution posters, and even gramophone records from the 1930s.

Teresa Coleman

79 Wyndham St ⓦ www.teresacoleman.com. One of Hong Kong's best-known antique dealers, with a reputation for textiles.

Restaurants

Café Deco

Peak Galleria, 118 Peak Rd, The Peak ⓣ 2849 5111. Mon–Thurs 11.30am–midnight, Fri & Sat 11.30am–1am, Sun 9.30am–midnight. Exceptional views and a stylish Art Deco interior that extends through to the toilets. The menu includes pizzas, curries, noodles, grilled meats and oysters, or you can just have cake and coffee – there's often also live jazz. The location ensures relatively high prices. Book if you want window seats.

Chippy

51A Wellington St, entrance down the steps on Pottinger St; no phone. Mon–Fri 11am–3pm & 6–10.30pm, Sat 11am–7pm. The last authentic British fish and chip shop in Hong Kong, whose tiny interior offers a couple of tables if you don't want a takeaway. Fries are great, though fish is sometimes a bit mushy. A large plate of battered cod and chips costs $85.

Luk Yu Tea House

24–26 Stanley St, just west of D'Aguilar St ⓣ 2523 5464. Daily 7am–6pm. A snapshot from the 1930s, with old wooden furniture and ceiling fans, this self-consciously traditional restaurant's mainstay is *dim sum*. Despite its local fame, the quality of the food barely justifies the tourist-inflated prices. Upwards of $100 a head; reservations essential.

M at the Fringe

2 Lower Albert Rd ⓣ 2877 4000. Mon–Sat noon–3pm & 6pm–12.30am, Sun 7pm–midnight. Stylish restaurant much favoured by the glitterati for its boldly flavoured, internationally influenced, health-

conscious meat, fish and veggie dishes. Around $300 a head.

Man Wah

Floor 25, Mandarin Oriental Hotel, 5 Connaught Rd ☎2522 0111. Daily noon–3pm & 6.30–11pm. Subtle and accomplished southern Chinese food at connoisseurs' prices ($500 a head and up), though the view outperforms the menu. The hotel's *Clipper Lounge* is also a good place for a formal English afternoon tea.

Nha Trang

88–90 Wellington St ☎2581 9992. Daily noon–11pm. First-rate Vietnamese food, whose crisp, clean, and sharp flavours make a nice break from more muggy Chinese fare. The grilled prawn and pomelo salad, rice-skin rolls, and lemongrass beef are excellent, and two can eat very well for $200.

The Peak Lookout

121 Peak Rd ☎2849 1000. Mon–Thurs 10.30am–11.30pm, Fri & Sat 10.30am–1am, Sun 8.30am–11.30pm. This place used to be famous for its views, but has been cruelly robbed of them by the ugly Peak Tower. The stone colonial building with raked ceilings retains plenty of atmosphere inside though, and the food, with an Asian-Indian slant, is still reasonable value for brunch or al fresco dining at night. Reckon on around $200 per head for a full meal.

Roof Garden

Top floor at The Fringe Club, 2 Lower Albert Rd ☎2521 7251. Lunch Mon–Fri noon–2.30pm. Bar Mon–Thurs noon–midnight, Fri & Sat noon–3am. Attached to a gallery, this bar and buffet has rooftop tables, and offers vegetarian all-you-can-eat lunches for $65, and tapas from $20 in the evening.

Thai Lemongrass

Floor 3, California Tower, 30 D'Aguilar St ☎2905 1688. Mon–Thurs noon–2.30pm & 6.30–11pm, Fri & Sat noon–2.30pm & 7–11.30pm, Sun 6.30–10.30pm. Authentically spicy, complex flavours prevail at this much-recommended long-time favourite. They do standards like red curry and *tum yam gaeng* (spicy prawn soup) very well, along with more unusual dishes such as beef and mango. Upwards of $200 a head.

Tsui Wah

17–19 Wellington St; no phone. Daily 10am–8pm. Multi-storey institution serving a huge array of inexpensive Cantonese fast food, but fishball noodle soup is the thing to go for – the stock is very good quality – along with Hai Nam chicken or the very sweet deserts. Packed to bursting at lunchtimes.

T.W. Café

2–10 Lyndhurst Terrace; no phone. Not only do they serve fine coffee here, but also large set breakfasts of egg and toast, fried fillet of sole, or chicken steaks for around $25. Window bar for people watching.

Yung Kee

32–40 Wellington St, on the corner with D'Aguilar St ☎2522 1624. Daily 11am–11.30pm. An enormous place with bright lights, scurrying staff and seating for a thousand, this is one of Hong Kong's institutions. Their roast goose and pigeon are superb, and the *dim sum* is also good. Around $200 a head and highly recommended.

Zhong Guo Song

6 Wo On Lane ☎2810 4141. Daily 11.30am–10.30pm. Tiny, with absolutely no decor, but the straightforward, home-style

▲ YUNG KEE RESTAURANT

Cantonese dishes are fresh, excellently cooked, and inexpensive.

Bars and clubs

Bit Point

31 D'Aguilar St ☎2523 7436. Mon–Sat noon–2am, Sun 4pm–late; happy hour 4–9pm. German theme-bar, concentrating on meals until around 10pm, after which the bar starts selling industrial quantities of lager and schnapps as the jukebox blares.

Bulldog

Ground Floor, 17 Lan Kwai Fong ☎2523 3528. Mon–Thurs & Sun noon–2am, Fri & Sat noon–4am; happy hour 5–8pm. Fourteen-metre-long bar, plasma screen TVs tuned to world sports and a dart board – this bar and grill is for kicking back in and getting rowdy over a game of soccer.

California

Ground Floor, California Tower, 30–32 Lan Kwai Fong ☎2521 1345. Mon, Tues & Thurs noon–1am, Wed, Fri & Sat noon–4am, Sun 6pm–midnight. Expensive American bar and restaurant with a tiny dance floor on which yuppies strut their stuff. It's been around for too long to be at the cutting edge of anything, but can still be fun on occasion.

Captain's Bar

Mandarin Oriental Hotel, 5 Connaught Rd ☎2521 0111. Daily 11am–2.30am. Knowledgeable bar staff can provide you with every cocktail known to man, and the atmosphere is lively, with an excellent Filipino band playing nightly 9pm–2am.

C Bar

Ground Floor, California Tower, 30–32 D'Aguilar St ☎2530 3695. Mon–Thurs 7.30pm–1am, Fri & Sat 7.30pm–2am, Sun 2–10pm. Tiny corner-bar whose big draw is frozen cocktails dispensed with a giant syringe. The associated *C Club* downstairs pulls in hip and very young crowds with Ibiza DJs playing house music. A fun and rowdy place.

Club 64

Ground Floor, 12–14 Wing Wah Lane ☎2523 2801. Happy hour is a long 2.30–9pm. Mon–Sat noon–2am, Sun noon–6pm. Down-at-heel, back-alley drinking den playing blues and rock to an enthusiastic, vaguely indie crowd mast mights, many of whom spill out onto the pavement later.

D26

26 D'Aguilar St ☎2877 1610. Small, low-key bar which is a good place for a warm-up drink or if you actually want a conversation with your companions.

▲ C BAR

Fringe Club

2 Lower Albert Rd ☎2521 7251. Mon–Thurs noon–midnight, Fri & Sat noon–3am; happy hour 4–9pm. The ground-floor bar of this theatre and art-gallery complex has good-value beers and live music, and there's also a popular rooftop bar.

Insomnia

38–44 D'Aguilar St ☎2525 0957. Daily 8am–6am. Street-side bar where, early on in the evening at least, conversation is possible. Later, the house band plays covers at maximum volume to an enthusiastic dance crowd.

Keg

52 D'Aguilar St ☎2810 0369. Mon–Thurs & Sun 5pm–1am, Fri & Sat 5pm–2am. Decked out in wood and metal trim to resemble the inside of a barrel, this place has a big range of imported beers, including Ruddles and Hoegaarden. Popular with expat Brits who want more than Pilsner in their pint pots.

Post '97

9 Lan Kwai Fong ☎2186 1816. Sun–Thurs 9.30–1am, Fri & Sat 9.30–2.30am. There's a disco downstairs and a arty, bohemian atmosphere in the bar upstairs, with a strong gay presence on Friday nights. Serves fry-ups, sandwiches and all-day breakfasts.

Schnurrbart

Ground Floor, Winner Building, 27 D'Aguilar St ☎2523 4700. Mon–Thurs noon–12.30am, Fri & Sat noon–1.30am, Sun 6pm–12.30am. Long-established German bar with herring and sausage snacks, and some of the best beer around. Serious headaches are available courtesy of the 25 different kinds of schnapps on offer.

Hong Kong Island: Mid-Levels and Western

Central's western boundaries are somewhat blurred, but as you move uphill the area below Lyndhurst Terrace is generally known as Mid-Levels, incorporating the newly gentrified region of SoHo. It's visually rather dull, with no grand buildings from any era, and the major pull is the growing number of swanky bars and restaurants. The Mid-Levels in turn blend imperceptibly with Western, a cover-all term for the remaining downtown districts west of Central, including Sheung Wan and Tai Ping Shan. Here, it's a few pockets of older buildings, stepped market lanes such as Pottinger Street and traditional stores which lend some atmosphere to the otherwise bland modernity of waterfront expressways and high-rises. The area's biggest single attraction is undoubtedly Hollywood Road, with its wealth of antique and arts stores and the magnificent Man Mo temple.

Jamia Mosque and Ohel Leah Synagogue

Caine Road is Mid-Levels' main artery, leading past the Roman Catholic cathedral to Shelley Street, a left turn up which is the Jamia Mosque, a focus for the territory's fifty thousand Muslims. The present building dates from 1915, a pale-green structure set in its own quiet, raised courtyard above the surrounding terraces (there's no public entry).

West on busy **Robinson Road**, stairs lead down to the whitewashed Ohel Leah Synagogue, lurking in its own quiet, leafy hollow below the main road. The territory's best-known synagogue, it was built by the wealthy Sassoon family in 1902. Great care has recently been taken to restore the oak-carved and painted interior, although unfortunately security concerns make it difficult to simply drop in for a look round – if you want to go in, bring ID and ask at the entrance.

▼ THE MID-LEVELS ESCALATOR

The Mid-Levels Escalator

The **Mid-Levels Escalator** cuts up the hillside for 800m from the footbridge across Queen's Road by the corner of Jubilee Street, along Cochrane Street and across Hollywood, Caine and Robinson roads, ending at Conduit Road. It is capable of carrying thirty thousand people a day on a **one-way system**, which changes direction during the day: uphill from 10.20am to midnight, downhill from 6am to 10am (use accompanying staircases to go against the flow). All told, it's a twenty-minute ride from bottom to top, or 45 minutes if you have to walk.

SoHo

The Mid-Levels Escalator makes it easy to reach a district recently christened **SoHo**, as in South of Hollywood Road, although it now also extends north into Peel, Wellington and Gage streets. There are dozens of restaurants and bars here, opening, closing and changing their name and cuisine every

month. The area's daytime appeal is mainly down to a few old-style shophouses, and while the tide of gentrification is strong (florists, interior decorators and antique shops have all moved in), you'll still find the sort of practical outlets – butchers, hardware shops and rice sellers – that tell you this remains a real Chinese neighbourhood.

Sheung Wan

Sheung Wan begins pretty much west of Jubilee Street, and though modern development has torn out many of the **old lanes** and their street vendors, a few – such as Wing Kut Street and Man Wa Lane – survive, and are full of stalls hawking calligraphy brushes, clothes and carved name stamps or "chops".

Sheung Wan's most distinctive structure is the massive **Shun Tak Centre**; down at the waterfront on Connaught Road, its twin towers are encased in a distinctive red framework and house the Macau Ferry Terminal. Opposite is the **Western Market** (daily 10am–7pm), whose fine Edwardian brick- and ironwork shell houses two floors of fabric shops. For a typical Chinese produce market – involving vast amounts of fruit, vegetables, and freshly slaughtered meat – try **Sheung Wan Market** on Morrison Street; the second floor is a mass of stalls (daily 6am–2am) serving all sorts of light snacks.

The streets due west of here provide glimpses of the trades and industries that date back to Hong Kong's settlement. Many shops on Wing Lok Street and Bonham Strand specialize in **bird's nest** and **ginseng**: the nests are used to make bird nest soup, a gastronomic speciality said to promote longevity; as the nest is tasteless, however, the dish's quality rests in the soup itself. Ginseng, the root of a plant found in Southeast Asia and North America, is prescribed for a whole host of problems, from reviving mental

▼ MAN SORTING GINSENG

Medicinal tea

Medicinal tea is an integral part of Chinese life, and is sold from open-fronted shops where cups or bowls are ranged on a counter alongside ornate brass urns, each hung with a label naming the concoction in Chinese. Despite the name, these brews are made not from tea leaves but from various astringent medicinal herbs, and – like most medicines – need to be drunk down in one gulp before you've had a chance to taste them (the Cantonese term, *fu cha*, translates as "bitter tea"). Popular in winter for driving off colds are *ng fa cha* (five-flower tea) and *ya sei mei* (twenty-four flavour tea).

faculties in the aged, to curing impotence – some of the larger ginseng trading companies have venerable interiors decked out in teak and glass panels. Many shops in Ko Shing Street are dedicated wholesalers, selling **traditional Chinese medicines** such as deer antlers, crushed pearls, dried seahorses and assorted herbalists' paraphernalia. Others lean towards kitchen supplies with their piles of dried mushrooms, salted and preserved fish, dried squid, oysters, sea slugs, scallops and seaweed.

Hollywood Road

Hollywood Road, and the streets nearby, form a run of antique shops, curio sellers and furniture stores. There's some wonderful Asian applied art here – furniture, old and new ceramics, burial pottery, painted screens, prints, jewellery and embroidery – and a group of more upmarket antique shops at the eastern end of Hollywood Road. As you move further west the selection becomes more mixed (and prices get lower), with any number of smaller places and pavement vendors selling bric-a-brac and junk on parallel **Upper Lascar Row**. In Victorian times this market was infamous for its large number of thieves, and dubbed "Cat Street" by the white population (after "cat burglar", according to one story). The western stretch of Hollywood Road is renowned

▼ TEA SHOP

▲ HOLLYWOOD ROAD

for its coffin makers, with some businesses specializing in silk grave clothes.

Man Mo Temple

Hollywood Rd. Daily 8am–6pm. Free.

The Man Mo Temple is one of Hong Kong's oldest, built in the 1840s and equipped with interior decorations from mainland China, all hung with smouldering incense spirals. The temple's name derives from the words for "civil" (*man*) and "martial" (*mo*): the first attribute belongs to the god of literature, Man Cheong, who protects civil servants (he's the red-robed statue wielding a writing brush); the latter to the martial deity, Kuan Ti (represented by another statue, in green, holding a sword). Kuan Ti is based on the real-life warrior Kuan Yu of the Three Kingdoms Period (around 220 AD), who was protector of – among other things – pawnshops, policemen, secret societies and the military.

▼ SPIRALS, MAN MO TEMPLE

The other altars in the temple are to Pao Kung, the god of justice, and to Shing Wong, a god of the city, who protects the local neighbourhood.

Tai Ping Shan

Ladder Street is a steep flight of steps climbing up past the Man Mo Temple, built to ease the passage of nineteenth century sedan-chair bearers. At the top and off to the right lies the district of **Tai Ping Shan** or "Peaceful Mountain", which by the 1890s had belied its name by becoming a place whose overcrowded slums hosted outbreaks of plague. After a particularly virulent eruption in 1894 killed 2500 people, the slums were cleared and a Bacteriology Institute built nearby, where that year French researcher Alexandre Yersin discovered that plague was spread to humans by rat fleas. Housed in an attractive Edwardian building, the institute is now the **Museum of Medical Sciences** (Tues–Sat 10am–5pm, Sun 1–5pm; $10), though the dated medical equipment on display is less interesting than the area's history, which is illustrated with period photographs.

Tai Ping Shan district also houses a cluster of old neighbourhood temples, near the corner of Tai Ping Shan Street and Pound Lane. First is the **Kuan Yam Temple**, dating from 1840 and dedicated to the Buddhist goddess of mercy. The green-tiled **Shui Yuat Temple** opposite is dedicated to Shui Yuat Paak, revered for his ability to cure illnesses – the statue was installed during the 1894 plague outbreak in an attempt to quell the disease.

University Museum and Art Gallery

Bonham Rd ⓦwww.hku.hk/hkumag. Mon–Sat 9.30am–6pm, Sun 1.30–5.30pm. Free. Around 1km west from Tai Ping Shan (you'll need to take a taxi), The University of Hong Kong Museum and Art Gallery features an outstanding collection of Chinese art in two adjacent buildings. The collection is continually rotated, but permanent displays include a group of Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368 AD) **Nestorian bronze crosses**, which belonged to a heretic Christian group living in northern China. The **ceramics** collection ranges from Neolithic pottery through to the later ruling dynasties; items from the Tang Dynasty (618–907 AD) include some lively tri-colour-glazed camels, horses and pottery. Also on show is white ceramic ware from the Sui and Song dynasties, including two Song Dynasty porcelain pillows, both decorated with black and white line-drawings. More colourful are the Ming (1368–1644) and Qing (1645–1911) Dynasty bowls and dishes, displaying rich blues, greens and reds. In other sections, you can find a selection of woodcarvings and some furniture from the Ming and Qing dynasties, laid out as a room, along with a broad range of decorative items and Chinese paintings of the period.

Shops

Dragon Culture

184 & 231 Hollywood Rd ⓦwww.dragonculture.com.hk. Upmarket antiques, such as Tang sculptures and Qing furniture and screens.

Dynasty Antiques
Ground Floor, 48–50 Hollywood Rd Ⓦ www.dynasty-antiques.com. Finely restored classic Chinese and Tibetan antique furniture, in a cavernous store. Mid-range to expensive.

Gallery One
31–33 Hollywood Rd. A huge selection of good-value semi-precious stones and jewellery – amber, amethyst, tiger's eye, crystal and much more; they will string any arrangement you want.

Karin Weber Gallery
32A Staunton St Ⓦ www.karinwebergallery.com. Large selection of mid-price contemporary fine art and regular pieces of antique furniture; they also organize furniture-buying trips to warehouses on the mainland.

L&E
188 Hollywood Rd Ⓦ www.lneco.com. A huge range of new decorative porcelain and old Chinese furniture at mid-range prices; reproduction furniture can also be made to order.

Shoeni Art Gallery
27 Hollywood Rd. Agents for modern Chinese artists such as Chen Yu, who combines Chinese images with Renaissance-era scenery. Many of the artists are becoming collectable and prices are fairly expensive.

Wing On
226 Des Voeux Rd. Long-established Chinese department store, for standard, day-to-day goods.

Restaurants

2 Sardines
43 Elgin St ⓣ 2973 6618. Daily noon–2pm & 6–11pm. Small restaurant that has built itself a big reputation for reliable, reasonably priced French food.

Bistro Manchu
33 Elgin St ⓣ 2536 9218. Daily noon–2.30pm & 6–11pm. Moderately priced Manchurian food of the hearty stew and dumpling variety – northern Chinese with a bit of Mongolian and Korean thrown in, served

▼ ANTIQUE SHOP, HOLLYWOOD ROAD

in stylish East-meets-West surroundings.

Fat Angelo's

49A–C Elgin St ☎2973 6808. Daily noon–midnight. Extremely popular, noisy Italian joint serving up enormous pizzas and a range of pasta dishes. Two people can happily share one dish, making eating here a fairly inexpensive night out.

Golden China

9 Jubilee St ☎2545 1472. Daily 8am–late afternoon. There's a small English sign, but don't expect any to be spoken inside – this isn't a problem, however, as this small, comfortable Cantonese diner, which has been catering to Central's office workers since 1963, has a limited menu along the lines of roast duck or roast pork and rice; portions cost $22–30.

Ivan the Kozak

Ground Floor, 46–48 Cochrane St ☎2851 1193. Mon–Fri noon–10.30pm, Sat & Sun 5–10.30pm. It's hard to tell if the deadpan atmosphere is deliberate stereotyping, but the food – chicken Kiev, lamb stew, lots of cabbage and potatoes – certainly is. Portions are decent, good value and tasty, but the highlight here is donning a fur coat and walking into the huge freezer for a shot of vodka and a photo.

Jaspa's

28–30 Staunton St ☎2869 0733. Mon–Sat 10.30am–10.30pm, Sun 9am–10.30pm. A mix of hearty European and Mexican meals, with a wide vegetarian selection. Ideal for children, as each table comes with wax crayons and a paper tablecloth. Around $100 a head.

La Kasbah

17 Hollywood Rd ☎2525 9493. Mon–Sat 6.30–11.30pm. Heavy wooden doors open into a red-lit, intimate restaurant thumping to the sound of Arabic beats. It's expensive (upwards of $200 a head) but their honey pastries and lamb stew with dates make it worthwhile.

La Pampa

32 Staunton St ☎2868 6959. Daily noon–3pm & 6–11pm. Moderately expensive Argentinian restaurant which does what it does – barbecued steak, mainly – exceedingly well. You order by weight, it's grilled just how you want it, and served with nominal quantities of vegetables.

Lin Heung Tea House

160–164 Wellington St ☎2544 4556. Daily from 7.30am. This famous place relocated here from Guangzhou (in China) around 1950, and they've been so busy since, they haven't had time to change the furnishings or allow their ancient staff to retire. Fantastic atmosphere for *dim sum*, if you like crowded, lively venues with inexpensive food.

▼ LA PAMPA RESTAURANT

Muyu Zigan

26 Cochrane St; no phone. Daily 10am–9pm. The main sign is in Chinese, but there's a small one in English over the doorway reading "Between Wu Yue". Great Shanghai-style snacks, including spicy noodles, stewed Dongpo pork, little dumplings, and marinated cucumber slices. Portions are small, the idea being that you order a selection. Inexpensive.

Sherpa Nepalese Cuisine

11 Staunton St ☎2973 6886. Daily 11am–3pm & 6–11pm. Friendly restaurant with an interesting range of vegetarian dishes, and excellent *roti* (Nepali bread). Inexpensive.

Taichong Bakery

32 Lyndhurst Terrace. Daily early morning–late afternoon. Sells take-away Cantonese roast pork buns and custard tarts so popular that long queues form as each batch is removed from the oven.

Wyndham Street Deli

36 Wyndham St; no phone. Mon–Sat 7am–11pm, Sun 9am–6pm. European-style deli offering moderately priced sandwiches, pastas, grills and salads, plus wonderful cakes and desserts. Good, reasonably priced (for Hong Kong) wine list.

Yellow Door Kitchen

6th Floor, 37 Cochrane St; entrance on Lyndhurst Terrace next to Dublin Jack (see below) ☎2858 6555. Mon–Fri noon–2.30pm & 6.30–11pm, Sat 6.30–11pm. This refreshing and friendly place offers an authentic Sichuanese menu including unusual items such as bitter melon; they'll make their dishes as spicy as you'd get in China if you ask. Set dinner at $220 a head will leave you full for a day.

Bars and clubs

Bar 1911

27 Staunton St ☎2810 6681. Mon–Sat 5pm–midnight, Sun 5–11pm. Ignore the "members only" sign – this is one of SoHo's best-established and most popular joints, offering comfortable seats and reasonable noise levels if you want to talk. Not a bargain, but nowhere in this area is.

Dinamoe Hum

1st Floor, 28 Elgin St ☎2521 2823. Tues–Sat 6–11.30pm. Local and international artists play nightly at this tiny venue – there's room for an audience of just twenty. Variable cover charge depending on the band; food and drink available.

Dublin Jack

37 Cochrane St ☎2543 0081. Mon–Fri 8am–2am, Sat & Sun 11am–2am; happy hour noon–8pm. Irish pub, just under the escalator exit for Lyndhurst Terrace. Draft Guinness, big portions of tasty Irish food, and room to stand outside, as well as over a hundred different varieties of whiskey.

The Globe

39 Hollywood Rd ☎2543 1941. Mon–Fri 7.30pm–late, Sat & Sun 10.30pm–late. Cosy, friendly bar serving snacks, with a great jukebox and the best beer in SoHo, including British and European ales and Belgian wheat beer. Popular with locals after work, and can get rowdier later on.

Hong Kong Island: Wan Chai, Causeway Bay and Happy Valley

Wan Chai and Causeway Bay, narrow strips of main roads and high-rise development, together cover a four-kilometre-long stretch of Hong Kong Island's north shore. At the western end, Wan Chai's reputation for seedy bars and clubs dates back to the 1940s, and was immortalized a decade later in Richard Mason's infamous but touching novel, *The World of Suzie Wong*. Set against those past excesses, present-day Wan Chai is fairly tame: soaring rents and modern development have erased much of the sleaze, though a rash of bars and clubs means that it's still a popular venue for a night out. Eastwards along the main arteries of Gloucester, Lockhart and Hennessy roads, Wan Chai blends seamlessly with the densely packed shopping and residential district of Causeway Bay. As is often the case in Hong Kong, land reclamation has made a joke of the name, and the district's only surviving maritime function is as a typhoon shelter, where ranks of junks and yachts huddle during storms. The Eastern Cross-Harbour Tunnel from Kowloon exits here too, so it's not a pretty area. There are some attractions, however, including one of Hong Kong's best parks and a host of inexpensive places to stay and eat. A kilometre south of Causeway Bay, Happy Valley Racecourse is emphatically worth a trip on Wednesday evenings, to wallow in the atmosphere of the horseraces – the only legal outlet for gamblers in Hong Kong.

The Convention and Exhibition Centre

Convention Avenue. Of all the huge buildings looming over Wan Chai's harbourfront, the weirdest is the Convention and Exhibition Centre, whose curve-roofed **CEC Extension** resembles, more or less, a giant manta ray. The extension was where the British formally handed Hong Kong back to the Chinese in June 1997, and as such is worth a visit; otherwise, the building is of most interest for its architecture.

Two waterfront monuments here are usually swamped by mainland Chinese tourists. Built in 1999 to commemorate the handover, the glum, gravestone-like **Reunification Monument** bears the signature of Chinese President Jiang

Zemin, and stands in marked contrast to the cheerfully golden **Forever Blooming Bauhinia Sculpture**. The orchid-like bauhinia flower was adopted as the SAR's regional emblem in 1997, its five petals appearing on Hong Kong's red flag.

From the statues, a harbourfront promenade leads west all the way to the Star Ferry Pier in Central, though current redevelopment may necessitate detours. You can also catch a cross-harbour ferry (daily 7.30am–11pm; 10min; $2.20) to Tsim Sha Tsui from the Wan Chai Star Ferry Pier, just east of the Exhibition Centre.

▲ THE CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION CENTRE

Central Plaza

Harbour Rd. Sited opposite the Convention and Exhibition Centre, Central Plaza is another notable architectural marvel – it's the world's tallest building made of reinforced concrete (374m). Triangular in shape, it's topped by a glass pyramid from which a 64-metre mast protrudes: the locals, always quick to debunk a new building, dubbed it "The Big Syringe". As if this wasn't distinctive enough, it's lit at night by luminous neon panels, while the spire on top of the pyramid has four sections that change colour every fifteen minutes to show the time.

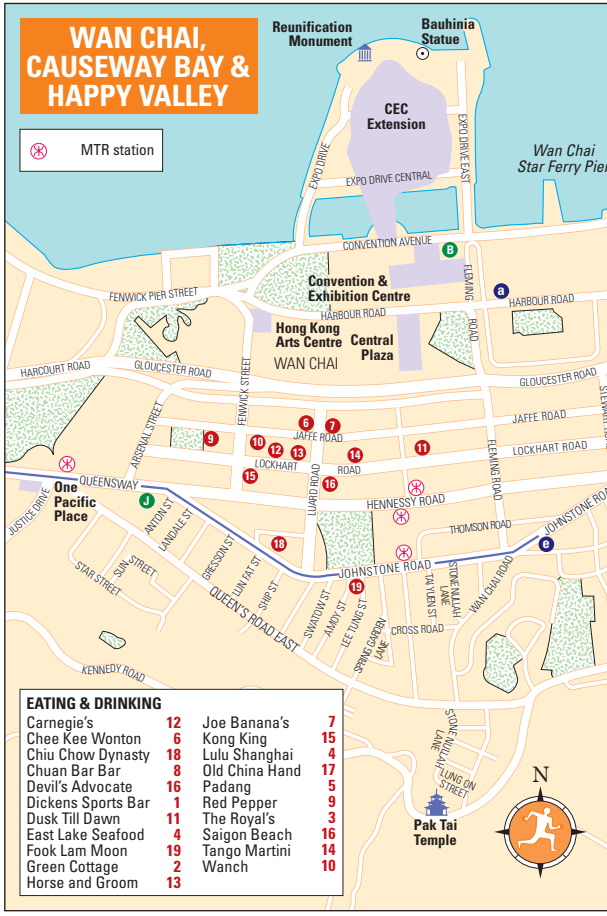
▼ THE BAUHINIA SCULPTURE

Lockhart Road

If Wan Chai has a main street, it's probably Lockhart Road, running from east to west. Its heady days as a thriving red-light district, throbbing with US marines on leave, are now gone, but that's not to say the area has become anything near gentrified. Many of the bars and clubs here make a living from fleecing tourists, and a walk down the street at night is still a fairly lively experience. Most of the pubs and clubs between Luard and Fleming roads are rowdy until the small hours, and it's easy to get a late meal in the hundreds of local restaurants.

The Pak Tai temple

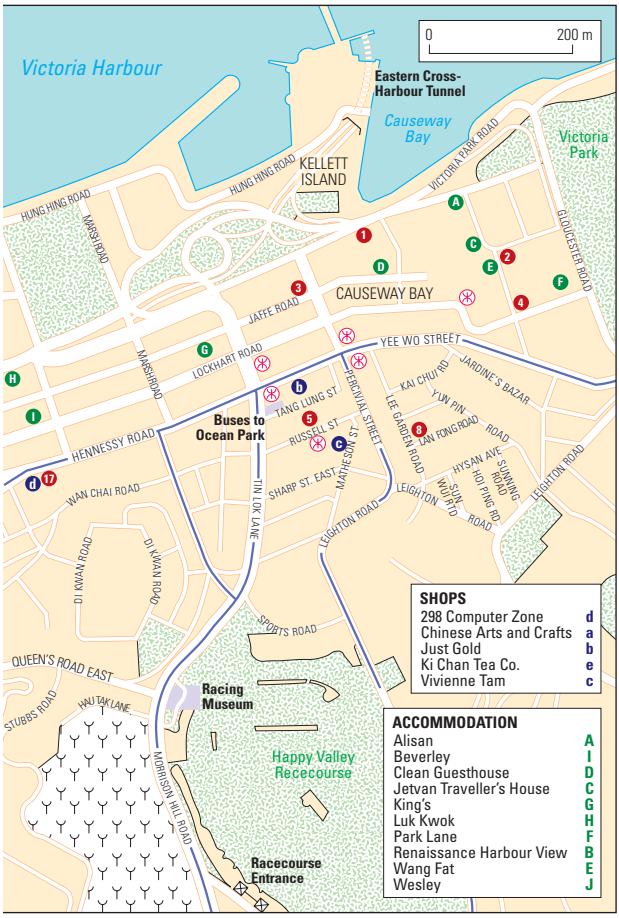
Lung On St, South off Queen's Rd East along Stone Nullah Lane. Dawn to dusk. Free. The Pak Tai Temple is dedicated to Pak Tai, Emperor of the North, whose task it is to maintain harmony on earth (and prevent flooding). It's a beautiful temple, especially the roof, which is decorated in



the classic southern Chinese manner with green-and-blue porcelain figurines of heroes and undulating dragons. Inside the main hall, Pak Tai is represented by a tall, seventeenth-century copper statue, seated on a throne facing the door. Up the steps behind, four guardian figures flank a second image of the ebony-faced and bearded god, resplendent in an embroidered jacket. In a room off to the left, craftsmen construct burial offerings from paper and bamboo – everything from houses to cars – that are burned in order to equip the deceased for the afterlife.

The Noon Day Gun

Gloucester Rd. Causeway Bay's sole visible colonial relic is a small ship cannon known as the Noon Day Gun, celebrated in Noel Coward's song *Mad Dogs and Englishmen* and which is, even today, detonated daily



at noon by a smartly dressed officer. There are many stories to explain why, but the most widespread tells of how an employee of the trading firm Jardine Matheson once fired off a salute to one of his company's ships, outraging the governor (who had the monopoly on this sort of exercise), who ordered the offence to be re-enacted daily at noon for evermore. Unless you catch the actual event, the gun itself is a bit underwhelming, and just placed in a railed-off garden.

Victoria Park

Daily 6am–10pm. Sited east of Gloucester Road, Victoria Park is a flat, spacious spread of paving, sports fields, and ornamental borders. It's busy around the clock, from martial arts practitioners going through their routines and old men airing their songbirds

▲ THE PAK TAI TEMPLE

in little cages at the crack of dawn, to people cooling off on benches under the trees at midday and football matches in the afternoon. There's also a **swimming pool** (April–Dec 6.30am–noon, 1–5pm & 6–10pm; adults $19, children $9). A couple of times a year the park hosts some lively festivals, including a flower market at Chinese New Year, a lantern display for the Mid-Autumn Festival and the annual candle-lit vigil for the victims of Tiananmen Square on June 4.

Over Causeway Road from the park's southeastern corner, and up Tin Hau Temple Road, elderly **Tin Hau Temple** (dawn to dusk; free) is sited on top of a little hill and is dedicated to southern China's sea goddess. Once sited on the seafront and now marooned inland, it's not of great importance, but gives an idea of the extent of Hong Kong's land reclamation projects.

▲ TIMES SQUARE

Times Square

The most startling fixture in the Causeway Bay shopping area is the beige blockbuster of a building that is Times Square, at the corner of Matheson and Russell streets. Spearing skywards from a comparatively small space at ground level, it exemplifies Hong Kong's modern architecture, where space can only be gained by building upwards and distinction attained by unexpected design – in this case, a vertical shopping mall supported by great marble trunks and featuring a cathedral window and giant video advertising screen. From the massive open-plan lobby, silver bullet elevators whiz up to the shopping floors. At ground level there's a cinema and access to Causeway Bay MTR station.

Happy Valley Racecourse

The only gambling legally allowed in Hong Kong is on

▲ CEMETERIES, HAPPY VALLEY

horseracing, and the Happy Valley Racecourse is the traditional centre of this multi-million-dollar business. It's controlled by the Hong Kong Jockey Club, one of the colony's power bastions since its foundation in 1884, with a board of stewards made up of the leading lights of Hong Kong big business. A percentage of the profits go to social and charitable causes and such is the passion for betting in Hong Kong that the racing season pulls in over $80 billion per year.

The season runs from September to mid-June and there are usually meetings every Wednesday night, an intense experience given the crowds packed into the high stands surrounding the tight track. Entrance to the public enclosure is $10; there you can mix with a beery expat crowd, watch the horses being paraded before each race, and pump the staff to make sense of the intricate accumulator bets that Hong Kong bookies specialize in. Other options include joining the hard-bitten Chinese punters up in the stands, mostly watching the action on television ($20, plus all the cigarette smoke you can handle), or signing up for the Hong Kong Tourist Board's **Come Horseracing Tour** ($540–790 depending on the event), which will take you to the course, feed you before the races, get you into the members' enclosure and hand out some racing tips: you need to be over 18 and have been in

▲ KI CHAN TEA CO.

Hong Kong for less than three weeks – take your passport to any HKTB office at least a day before the race.

On the second floor of the main building at the racecourse, the **Hong Kong Racing Museum** (Tues–Sun 10am–5pm; free) presents various aspects of Hong Kong's racing history, from the early days in Happy Valley through the construction of the New Territories' track at Sha Tin (see p.114) to the charitable projects funded by the Jockey Club. Racing buffs can also study champion racehorse characteristics and famous jockeys in the museum's eight galleries and cinema.

The Cemeteries

Wong Nai Chung Rd. Daily 8am–6pm. Free. The series of terraced hillside cemeteries west of the racecourse provides an interesting snapshot of the territory's ethnic and religious mix during the mid-nineteenth-century, with separate enclosures for Muslim, Catholic, Protestant (the largest, with a berth for Lord Napier, the first Chief Superintendent of Trade with China), Parsee and Jewish inhabitants.

Shops

298 Computer Zone

298 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai. Warren-like place, full of shops selling new, secondhand, official and pirated computer gear.

Chinese Arts and Crafts

26 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai. A good selection of all types and qualities of china in traditional styles, plus a few antique pieces – some items are very good value.

Just Gold

452 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai. Local chain specializing in fun, fashionable, cheapish designs for young women.

Ki Chan Tea Co.

174 Johnston Rd, Wan Chai. Old men distribute the tea leaves from their red-and-gold cylinders in this no-nonsense, well-established shop.

Vivienne Tam

Shop 219, Times Square, Causeway Bay. Funky shirts and dresses

in David Hockney-meets-Vivienne Westwood style, often featuring Chairman Mao and other icons of the East. Pricey.

Restaurants

Chee Kee Wonton

Ground Floor, 52 Russell St, Causeway Bay; no phone. Daily 11am–8pm. Small, low-key haunt with Chinese-only sign (look for the packed interior hung with Chinese prints and antique-style wooden stools), serving some of the tastiest *wonton* noodles in town. Soups are $24.

Chiu Chow Dynasty

2nd Floor, Emperor Group Centre, 288 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai ⓣ2832 6628. Daily 11am–11pm. Gloomy decor – the interior isn't spacious enough for the heavy wooden furniture – but top Chiu Chow fare, including sour-plum goose, deep-fried duck with taro, and the biggest range of Chiu Chow dumplings in town. $80 and upwards per main.

Chuan Bar Bar

20 Luard Rd, Wan Chai ⓣ2527 8388. Daily noon–midnight. A smart Sichuanese restaurant-bar hung with wooden screens and serving chilli fish fillets, "strange-flavoured" chicken (a famous Sichuanese dish), beancurd and bamboo shoots, aubergine with hot garlic sauce, and more. Mains around the $60 mark.

East Lake Seafood

4th Floor, Pearl City, 22–36 Paterson St, Causeway Bay ⓣ2504 3311. Daily 7am–noon. Cheerful, noisy place packed with local Chinese eating *dim sum*.

Fook Lam Moon

35–45 Johnston Rd, Wan Chai ⓣ2866 0663. Daily 11.30am–3pm & 6–11pm. Amongst Hong Kong's finest and most famous Cantonese restaurants, this is not the place to come if you're skimping on costs. House specialities include bird's nest in coconut milk, abalone, crispy piglet and crisp-skinned chicken. Count on $500 a head.

▼ FOOK LAM MOON

Green Cottage

32 Cannon St, Causeway Bay ☎2832 2863. Daily 10.30am–10.30pm. This popular, family-run Vietnamese restaurant serves up, amongst other things, thirty different types of noodle soup (*pho*) in pleasant but cramped surroundings. Everything is good value for money, in particular the curried duck with French bread.

Jo Jo's

1st Floor, 86–90 Johnston Rd, Wan Chai (entrance on Lee Tung St) ☎2527 3776. Daily 11am–3pm & 6–11pm. Hardly luxury surroundings, but inexpensive Indian fare with tandoori specialities and views out onto the busy street.

Kong King

117 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai ☎2520 0988. Daily 11am–3pm & 6–11pm. Plain, canteen-like furnishings but the regional Chinese fare is tasty and includes classic Sichuanese "sizzling rice" (deep-fried rice cake with a light seafood soup poured over it at the table), hand-made noodles with shredded pork and preserved vegetables, plus a big range of northern-style dumplings; you can eat well here for $100 a head.

Lulu Shanghai

3rd Floor, Pearl City, Paterson St, Causeway Bay ☎2882 2972. Daily 11.30am–2pm & 6pm–midnight. Fairly smart place to eat some of the best Shanghai dishes served in Hong Kong; try the cold, marinated sliced duck; sautéed fresh prawns; steamed dumplings; and fish slices served in a taro "cup" with pine nuts and sweetcorn kernels. Count on $120 a head.

Padang

J.P. Plaza, 22–36 Paterson St, Causeway Bay ☎2881 5075. This unpretentious place does a good run of *rendang* (dry beef curry), satays, grilled seafood, mutton curry and – especially – durian-flavoured desserts. A little pricey for what you get, but good. Mains from $50.

Red Pepper

7 Lan Fong Rd, Causeway Bay ☎2577 3811. Daily noon–11.45pm. Sichuanese place favoured by expats, which means it can get very busy, has higher-than-warranted prices and pushy staff. The smoked duck and beancurd are excellent. Set meal for two $158; otherwise, count on $70 per main.

Saigon Beach

66 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai ☎2529 7823. Daily noon–3pm & 6–10pm. Vietnamese place popular with young travellers and locals because they stick to the basics – grills, soups and cold rice rolls – and cook them well. They also do a large selection of inexpensive spicy, meat-filled French baguettes.

Bars and clubs

Carnegie's

53–55 Lockhart Rd ☎2866 6289. Daily 11am–3am. The noise level here means conversation is only possible by flash cards; once it's packed, hordes of punters keen to revel the night away fight for dancing space on the bar. Home of the much-talked-about topless barman (Wednesday night), plus occasional riotous club nights and regular live music.

Devil's Advocate

48–50 Lockhart Rd ☎2865 7271. Daily 11am–late. Hugely popular at the moment, especially with young office workers and expats – rotten juke-box selection, though. Cheap soft drinks at lunchtime.

Dickens Sports Bar

Lower Ground Floor, Excelsior Hotel, 281 Gloucester Rd ☎2837 6782. Mon–Thurs & Sun 11am–2am, Fri & Sat 11am–3am. This bar prides itself on re-creating an authentic British atmosphere: the kitchen dishes up genuine British pub grub, the TV airs British sitcoms, and there are English papers to read. One of the few decent hotel bars.

Dusk Till Dawn

76 Jaffe Rd ☎2528 4689. Mon–Sat noon–6am, Sun 3pm–6am; happy hour 5–11pm. Vaguely Mediterranean colours decorate this rowdy bar, full of loud live music, raucous staff, and hoarse punters.

Horse and Groom

161 Lockhart Rd ☎2507 2517. Mon–Sat 11am–4.30am, Sun 7pm–4am; happy hour Sat 6–9pm, Sun 8–10pm. Large, dark venue with wreathes of wrought iron and neon. The cheap drinks and Western pub food attract a good mixed crowd of expats and locals.

Joe Banana's

23 Luard Rd ☎2529 1811. Mon–Thurs 11.30am–5am, Fri & Sat 11.30am–6am, Sun 5pm–5am; happy hour noon–10pm. Unsophisticated American bar with a late disco, fake palms, and occasional live music. You need to be (or look) 21 to get in and there's a strict door policy – men need a shirt with a collar.

Old China Hand

104 Lockhart Rd ☎2527 9174. Mon–Sat 24hr, Sun 9am–2am. Pub for hard-core drinkers, hung-over clubbers (who come for breakfast), embittered, seedy expats acting the part, and those with a taste for loud music.

The Royal's

21 Cannon St ☎2832 7879. Daily 11am–2am. Dark, rowdy Chinese bar where you can watch the locals playing dice, accompanied by a loud Cantopop soundtrack.

Tango Martini

3rd Floor, Empire Land Commercial Centre, 81–85 Lockhart Rd ☎2528 0855. Mon–Fri noon–3pm & 6pm–2am, Sat & Sun 6pm–2am. This lounge-style bar-and-restaurant features comfy tiger-print couches and chairs and more than 201 martinis, setting it apart from most of Wan Chai's gritty establishments. Chic and expensive – you'll either love it or hate it.

Wanch

54 Jaffe Rd ☎2861 1621. Mon–Sat 11am–2am, Sun noon–2am. A Wan Chai institution, this tiny, unpretentious bar is jostling and friendly and has live music – usually folk and rock – every night. Also serves cheap, chunky cheeseburgers and sandwiches.

Hong Kong Island: the south side and east coast

Hong Kong Island's south side and east coast, while certainly not undeveloped, still offer something of an escape from the north shore's densely packed high-rises. The south side, in particular between Aberdeen and Stanley, features a long, fragmented coastline punctured by bays and inlets, though you'll have to share it with a good number of other people at the weekend. The beaches here are pretty enough, however, and there's further distraction in one of the SAR's two theme parks. Aberdeen and Stanley themselves pre-date the arrival of the British in the mid-nineteenth century, though neither is in any way traditional these days.

The north coast beyond Causeway Bay is less immediately appealing, with the apartment blocks and expressways continuing unabated as far as Shau Kei Wan, though there's an excellent cliff-top museum out this way and the tram ride is entertaining. The island's southeast corner – while requiring a little bit more effort to reach – has managed to remain as rural as anything can be in Hong Kong, featuring some almost wild coastal scenery (and a superb beach) out around Shek O.

▼ BOATS, ABERDEEN HARBOUR

Aberdeen

Bus #7 from Outer Islands Ferry Pier, Central; #70 from Exchange Square, Central; or #72 from Moreton Terrace, Causeway Bay. Aberdeen was one of the few places on Hong Kong Island already settled when the British arrived in the 1840s – the bay here was used as a shelter by the indigenous Hoklos and Tankas, who fished in the surrounding archipelago. Today the town comprises a tightly packed knot of tall concrete apartment blocks and street-level businesses overlooking the busy harbour, where a few hundred of Aberdeen's sixty thousand residents still live on sampans and junks. There are two small temples amongst the high-rises: the **Tai Wong Shrine** (above the junction of Aberdeen Old Main St and Aberdeen Main Rd), dedicated to a local god who protects fishermen and oversees the weather; and the solid stone **Tin Hau Temple**, built in 1851, at the junction of Aberdeen Main Road and Aberdeen Reservoir Road.

Aberdeen's main points of interest, though, are the morning **fish market** (busiest before 10am) and the chance to take a sampan ride around the harbour – head to the waterfront for either. The sampan rides (on demand, $50 after bargaining) cruise the straits between Aberdeen and Ap Lei Chau island opposite, offering photogenic views of houseboats jammed together, complete with dogs, drying laundry and outdoor kitchens, as well as boat yards and three **floating restaurants**, which are especially spectacular when lit up at night.

Ocean Park

ⓦ www.oceanpark.com.hk. Daily 10am–6pm. $185, under-11s $93 includes all rides and entry. Bus #629 from the Star Ferry Pier, Central.

Filling a whole peninsula, Ocean Park is an open-air theme park and oceanarium; it also features a pair of giant

▼ OCEAN PARK

pandas, for whom a special $80 million, two-thousand-square-metre complex has been created.

The first section, the Lowland area, is a landscaped garden with greenhouses, a butterfly house, a 3D-film simulator and a dinosaur discovery trail, with full-sized moving models. A **cable-car** hoists you from here 1.5km up the mountainside to the Headland section and its frightening "Dragon Roller-Coaster", and

the self-explanatory "Abyss Turbo Drop". There's also one of the world's largest reef aquariums, with a massive atoll reef that's home to more than two thousand fish, including giant rays and sharks. Looming over the lot is the **Ocean Park Tower**, 200m above sea level, giving superb vistas from its viewing platform and panoramic elevator. The Tai Shue Wan area below gives access to Middle Kingdom, a Chinese theme park with pagodas, traditional crafts and entertainment such as Chinese opera.

Repulse Bay

Bus #6, #6A, #61, #64 or #260 from Exchange Square, Central. Repulse Bay's name comes from the ship HMS *Repulse*, from which the British mopped up local pirates in the nineteenth century; during the colonial period the area was known for the cocktail parties held at

the grand *Repulse Bay Hotel*. Nowadays, the hotel has long gone and the bay is lined by ubiquitous apartment towers; the beach itself is clean and wide, though the water quality isn't great, and it's backed by a concrete promenade with some unmemorable cafés. On summer afternoons tens of thousands of people can descend on the sands – the record is seventy thousand – but the atmosphere is always fairly downmarket. Connoisseurs of kitsch may want to amble down to the little Chinese garden at the end of the prom, where a brightly painted group of goddesses, Buddha statues, stone lions and dragons offer some tempting photo opportunities.

If it all proves too crowded for comfort, try the nearby beaches at **Middle Bay** and **South Bay**, fifteen minutes' and thirty minutes' walk south around the bay respectively.

Stanley

Bus #6, #6A or #260 from Exchange Square, Central. When Britain seized Hong Hong there were already two thousand people living at the south coast settlement of Stanley, earning an income from fishing and piracy. Today, it's a small residential place, with low-key modern buildings surrounding Stanley Plaza and **Murray House**, built in 1843 for the British Army and moved stone by stone in 1982 from its previous site in

▲ MURRAY HOUSE, STANLEY

Central, where the Bank of China now stands.

To the east, Stanley's lively **market** (daily 10am–7pm) straddles the streets and alleys around Stanley Market Road, and is a good place to pick up touristy clothing, crockery and souvenirs. More impressive is the small **Tin Hau Temple** on the western side of the peninsula, dating from 1767. Interestingly, Tin Hau's statue has to share the hall with a dozen other deities of Taoist, Buddhist, and local origins, along with a darkened tiger pelt, bagged nearby in 1942 – the last ever shot in Hong Kong. There are also lanterns and model ships, reminding you of Tin Hau's role as protector of fishermen, though there's little fishing done from Stanley these days. Stanley's best stretch of sand is **St Stephen's Beach**, fifteen minutes south along the shore, with a short pier, a watersports centre, barbecue pits, showers and decent swimming.

Museum of Coastal Defence

Shau Kei Wan ⓦ www.lcsd.gov.hk/museum/history. Mon–Wed & Fri–Sun 10am–5pm. $10, free on Wed. MTR, tram or bus #2 from Central to Shau Kei Wan, then a signed 1km walk along Shau Kei Wan Main St. The Museum of Coastal Defence occupies the site of the Lei Yue Mun Fort, built by the British in 1887 to defend Victoria Harbour. The bulk of the museum is set in the renovated redoubt, the exhibition rooms reached by a maze of brick tunnels. The museum covers

▼ ST STEPHEN'S BEACH, STANLEY

all stages of Hong Kong's maritime history, and exhibits include an opium-pipe display, moving letters from prisoners-of-war under the Japanese, and the richly embroidered satin army uniforms of Ming and Qing dynasty soldiers, studded with iron rivets. Outside, accompanied by stunning views of the rugged eastern end of Victoria Harbour, there's a marked trail past restored gun emplacements, underground magazines, a torpedo station and a gunpowder factory.

Shek O

Bus #9 from Shau Kei Wan (next to the MTR station); or Sunday only #309 from Exchange Square, Central (hourly 2.10–6.10pm; last bus back departs Shek O at 7pm). Shek O is an unpretentious village down at Hong Kong's southeastern reaches, with the best beach on the island: wide, with white sand and fringed by shady trees, it can get very full at the weekend and the water is sometimes not fit for swimming. There are also a few restaurants and expat bars in the village, and on Sunday extra snack stalls open, serving the crowds who come down to swim. Unsurprisingly, Shek O is one of the most desirable addresses in Hong Kong, and there are some upmarket pieces of real estate in the area. You can get a flavour of things by walking through the village parallel with the beach and following the path up to **Shek O Headland** for some sweeping panoramas.

For more space and fewer people, **Big Wave Bay** is a half-hour walk north of Shek O, with another good beach, barbecue pits and a refreshment kiosk.

Restaurants

Happy Garden Vietnamese Thai

Near the bus stop, Shek O. Daily noon–10pm. One of several laid-back places with outdoor tables, luridly coloured drinks, and excellent food – try the water spinach with blechan beef, or huge Thai fish cakes. Mains cost around $60.

Jumbo Floating Restaurant

Shum Wan Pier Drive, Wong Chuk Hang ☎2553 9111. Daily 10.30am–4.30pm. Bus #75 from Exchange Square, Central to Shum Wan Pier then take an on-demand ferry; restaurant sometimes pays the homewards taxi fare if you spend enough. A Hong Kong institution, this ornate floating restaurant, done out with coloured dragons and heaps of gold and red paint, serves seafood and *dim sum* from 10.30am onwards, but the food is overpriced at upwards of $300 a head for a meal.

Lord Stanley at the Curry Pot

6th Floor, 90B Stanley Main St, Stanley ☎2899 0811. Daily noon–3pm & 6–10.30pm. Friendly little restaurant with ocean views from its sixth-floor windows, and delicately judged Indian food from all regions. The set lunch is fair value, but you also can't go wrong by choosing à la carte – count on $100 a head in either case.

Stanley's

1st & 2nd Floors, 90B Stanley Main St, Stanley ☎2831 8873. Daily noon–midnight. Chic French restaurant, which – despite high prices – is winning a lot of friends with its imaginative, regularly changing menu, and bay views.

▲ HAPPY GARDEN VIETNAMESE THAI

Tse Kee
80 & 82 Old Main St, Aberdeen. Daily 10.30am–6pm. Well-known noodle restaurant that does excellent fishball soup for less than $30. There are two separate entrances, which can be confusing, but you end up in the same place whichever one you take.

Kowloon: Tsim Sha Tsui

Kowloon, an English transliteration of the Cantonese *gau lung* ("nine dragons", after a ridge of hills here since levelled to provide flat space for building), was a twelve-square-kilometre peninsula north of Hong Kong Island on the Chinese mainland when the British added it to their possessions in 1860. Land reclamation has since more than doubled its size, and Kowloon is now one of the most densely populated areas in the world, nowhere more so than in the packed, frenetic waterfront district of Tsim Sha Tsui, where many visitors stay, eat and – especially – shop. The quantity and the variety of goods for sale here are staggering: in the kilometre or so from the waterfront to the top of Kowloon Park, a devoted window-shopper could find every bauble, electronic gadget and designer label known to man. Tsim Sha Tsui's vibrant "get rich, get ahead" mentality is echoed in the area's markets, restaurants, bars and pubs; this is one of the liveliest places in Hong Kong for a night out. If it all sounds too gruesomely commercial, there's solace in the Cultural Centre and several museums, while Tsim Sha Tsui's waterfront provides one of the best views of Central's skyline.

The western waterfront

Tsim Sha Tsui's **Star Ferry Pier** is sited at Kowloon's southwestern tip; immediately outside is a 45-metre-high clocktower, dating from 1921, the only remnant of the grand train station which once welcomed rail services from Europe. The ferry terminal sits at the bottom of a series of interconnected, upmarket shopping malls running up the western side of Tsim Sha Tsui's waterfront, one of the largest such complexes in Asia. The first section, **Ocean Terminal**, is where cruise liners and visiting warships dock; exclusive boutiques line the confusing maze of galleries that link it with the adjacent **Ocean Centre**, and, the next block up, **Harbour City** – between

▼ SHOPPING MALL, WESTERN WATERFRONT

them they boast several hotels, restaurants and a good number of exorbitantly priced clothes and shoes stores. To exit the mall at any stage, signs direct you out onto Canton Road, which runs northwards. East off it, just down Peking Road, **One Peking Road** is Tsim Sha Tsui's first example of Central-style modern architecture, a 160-metre-high, glassy, bow-fronted edifice whose upper floors are mostly restaurants, all with excellent harbour views. Back on Canton Road, continue north and you'll pass the **China Ferry Terminal**, another block of shops and restaurants set around the terminal for vessels shuttling back and forth between China and Macau.

The Peninsula Hotel

Salisbury Rd ☎2920 2888, ⓦwww.peninsula.com. The *Peninsula Hotel* is one of Tsim Sha Tsui's few throwbacks to colonial times. Built in the 1920s next

▲ AFTERNOON TEA AT THE *PENINSULA HOTEL*

to the train station, the hotel offered a shot of elegance to Hong Kong's weary new arrivals who had just spent weeks crossing Europe, Russia and China by rail. It remains one of the most expensive and stylish addresses in Hong Kong, and still offers a taste of more refined times in its opulent lobby, where afternoon tea is served (daily 2–7pm, $165 per person); you don't have to be staying, but note that dress rules apply (see box below).

The Hong Kong Cultural Centre

Salisbury Rd ☎2734 9009. Box office daily 10am–8pm. The Hong Kong Cultural Centre was built in 1980 to provide a cultural hub for this otherwise overtly materialistic city. It contains a concert hall and several theatres, where events from classical Italian and Chinese opera through to contemporary dance are performed (contact the box office for current programmes). Worthy though all this is, the building itself proves that you need more than money to create impressive architecture: costing six hundred million Hong Kong dollars, the building – astonishingly, given the harbourside location – has no windows. The pink-tiled exterior is awkwardly shaped, with angled walls and outshooting ribs creating a cloister surrounded by a starkly paved area, dotted with palm trees. An adjacent two-tiered walkway along the water offers the view of the harbour and Hong Kong Island denied from the inside; come here at night to see Central's towers in all their chromatic glory.

Afternoon tea

Heading to a smart hotel for British-style afternoon tea (with cucumber sandwiches and petit fours) is a Hong Kong institution. The *Peninsula* is the most magnificent and "traditional" option, but there's also the *Inter-Continental* (Salisbury Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui); the *Lobby Lounge* at the *Island Shangri-La* (Two Pacific Place, 88 Queens way, Central); the *Tiffin Lounge* at the *Grand Hyatt* (Harbour Rd, Wan Chai); and the *Mandarin Oriental* (Connaught Rd, Central). Expect to pay upwards of $150 per person for a set tea. **Dress code** is "smart casual", meaning that shorts, sandals and blue jeans are unacceptable.

▲ FINE JADE BOWLS, MUSEUM OF ART

Museum of Art

Salisbury Rd Ⓦwww.lcsd.gov.hk/hkma. Mon–Wed & Fri–Sun 10am–6pm. $10, Wed free. The Museum of Art houses six galleries of mostly classical Chinese paintings, ceramics and historical artefacts, though not much effort has been made to place them in any context. **The Xubaizhai Gallery of Chinese Painting and Calligraphy** features examples of superb penmanship (in Chinese calligraphy, it's the spirit of the brush-strokes which is most admired) and some quirky scroll paintings such as Jin Nong's podgy *Lone Horse* (1761). Next door, the **Contemporary Art Gallery** hosts post-1950s work, including silkscreen painting, calligraphy, ceramics, and paintings by Hong Kong artists in both Western and Chinese styles.

The high point of the third floor section on **Chinese Antiquities** is the display of Tang dynasty (618–907 AD) ceramics, from a period when an unparalleled level of interaction between China and the outside world fuelled great artistic innovations. In particular, the Tang tomb figures, streaked green and brown, show very "foreign" features in the characters' big noses and beards. These all complement the Chinese **Decorative Arts Gallery**, whose costumes, embroidery and textiles are outstanding. The **Historical Pictures Gallery** is of interest for contemporary illustrations by both Western and Chinese artists tracing the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century development of Hong Kong, Macau and Guangzhou (in China). The final fourth floor **Chinese Fine Art Gallery** shows selections from three thousand works, including modern Chinese art and animal and bird paintings.

The Space Museum

Salisbury Rd ☎2721 0226, Ⓦhttp://hk.space.museum. Mon & Wed–Fri 1–9pm, Sat & Sun 10am–9pm. $10, Wed free. The Chinese were the first to record Halley's Comet and the first to chart star movements – the Space Museum traces these breakthroughs and the entire history of astronomy with hands-on displays, push-button exhibits, video presentations and picture boards. There's also a Space Theatre ($32; 6–15 years, students and senior citizens $16; under-6s free), where an

ever-changing selection of films (either on space or the natural world) is shown on the massive wrap-around Omnimax screen, providing a thrilling sensory experience.

Nathan Road

Nathan Road is Tsim Sha Tsui's – and Kowloon's – main thoroughfare, running north from the waterfront all the way to the New Territories. It's always packed, the pavements with extraordinarily thick crowds, and the roads by fast-moving traffic. It's not just the neon along here that glitters, but the shop windows too, full of jewellery, the latest cameras, MP3 players and mobile phones, clothes, shoes and fine art. Even window-shopping is a struggle nonetheless, what with the crowds, hustlers and the insistent hawkers.

Nathan Road has its own shopping centres, the most notorious of which are the seething downmarket complexes of **Chungking** (nos. 36–44) and **Mirador mansions** (nos. 56–58), full of guesthouses, Indian restaurants, and super-cheap stalls for daily necessities. Side streets are also alive with similar possibilities. To the east of Nathan Road, **Granville Road** is famous for its bargain clothes shops, some of them showcasing the work of new, young designers, though you'll also find clothing, accessory and jewellery stores all the way along Carnarvon, Cameron and Kimberley roads. To the west, department stores and shopping centres include the large **Yue Hwa Chinese Products** store at the corner of Peking Road and Kowloon Park Drive, selling everything from traditional medicines to inexpensive leather jackets and carved jade animals.

Kowloon Park

Daily 6am–midnight. There's an escape from the teeming masses in Kowloon Park, which stretches along Nathan Road between Haiphong and Austin roads. Parts of it have been landscaped and styled as a Chinese garden with fountains, rest areas, a children's playground, and two

▼ NATHAN ROAD

▲ KOWLOON MOSQUE

bird collections – the wildfowl (including flamingoes and mandarin ducks) outside in landscaped ponds, the parrots and other exotically coloured rainforest species contained in a small aviary. There's also a **swimming complex** (daily 8am–noon, 1.30–6pm & 7.30–10pm; $21) and a sculpture walk.

The southeastern corner of the park is taken up with an open area known as the **Kung Fu Corner**. Full of practitioners from about 6am every morning, it also hosts free displays of various martial arts between 2.30pm and 4.30pm every Sunday. Below it, at 105 Nathan Road, is the large **Kowloon Mosque** (no public access), built in the mid-1980s to replace a mosque originally built in 1894 for the British Army's Muslim troops from India. It retains a classic design, with a central white marble dome and minarets.

Leave the park at the southern end and you can drop down to Haiphong Road and its small covered produce **market** at the Canton Road end (daily 6am–8pm).

China's martial arts

China's many martial arts mostly trace their origins back to Henan province's Shaolin Temple, where the sixth-century monk Boddhidharma developed exercises to balance the inactivity of meditation. These evolved into fighting routines for defending the temple, and were gradually disseminated into the rest of China.

Early morning is the best time to catch people training – Kowloon and Victoria parks are especially popular. The large groups moving slowly through their routines are doing *tai chi*; specifically local styles include *wing chun* – which became famous as being the first martial art Bruce Lee studied – and *hung gar*, associated with the nineteenth-century master Wong Fei Hung.

The Science Museum

Science Museum Rd Ⓜ http://hk.science.museum. Mon–Wed & Fri 1–9pm, Sat, Sun & public holidays 10am–9pm. $25, Wed free;. The Hong Kong Science Museum is especially fun for children, as there are plenty of hands-on exhibits. Subjects include the workings of kitchen and bathroom appliances, robotics, computers, mobile phones and other electronics, and even the most Luddite of visitors should be tempted to push buttons and operate robot arms with abandon. Don't miss the engaging look at brain perception in the "Human Body" section in the basement, or the World Population Meter, which counts up – at a frighteningly fast rate – the earth's population. Avoid Sundays if you can, since the attraction palls rather if you have to wait in line for a turn at the best of the exhibits.

Museum of History

Chatham Rd South Ⓜ http://hk.history.museum. Mon & Wed–Sat 10am–6pm, Sun 10am–7pm. $10, Wed free. The Hong Kong Museum of History is an ambitious trawl through the region's past, using videos, light shows, interactive software and life-sized reconstructions.

▼ PACKED STREET IN TSIM SHA TSUI

The museum's most interesting section is a reproduction of a 1930s street with tea shops that smell of tea, and a herbalist's niche filled with a bitter, pungent aroma. Perhaps what's most surprising is that these shops don't look much different from those in business in Mongkok and Sheung Wan today, almost a hundred years later. Noticeable gaps include little material on Hong Kong's ethnic populations of Indians, Nepalese and Filipinos, and scant coverage of events after the 1997 handover.

Shops

Chow Tai Fook

Shops G1 & G2, Holiday Inn Golden Mile, 50 Nathan Rd ⓦwww.chowtaifook.com. Chain with wide range of gold, diamond and jade jewellery at mid-range prices – a good place to get a feel for local styles and costs.

Elissa Cohen Jewellery

209 Hankow Centre, 5–15 Hankow Rd ⓦwww.elissacohen.com. Individual designs, either new or based on antique European or Chinese. Very elegant, though they do tend to overdo things slightly with encrusting gems.

Fortress

14–16 Hankow Rd. A local electronics chain selling the latest mobiles, MP3 players, digital cameras and laptops. No bargains, but you won't get ripped off either; a good indicator for what you should be paying locally.

Johnson & Co.

44 Hankow Rd. Tailoring for mostly male customers (they were a favourite with British military personnel stationed in Hong Kong), this shop also deals in middle-of-the-road jewellery and watches.

Joyce

23 Nathan Rd. Hong Kong's most fashionable boutique offers its own range of clothing, as well as many top overseas designer brands.

Sam's Tailors

94 Nathan Rd. A Hong Kong institution, as much for Sam's talent for self-publicity as for the quality of his clothes – he's reputed to have made suits for Bill Clinton, Jude Law and Pierce Brosnan.

Swindon Book Co. Ltd.

13–15 Lock Rd. One of Hong Kong's best English-language bookshops, with a large section on travel, local interest and Chinese culture.

Traveller's Home

2nd Floor, 55 Hankow Rd. Eclectic range of second-hand books,

Tailors and suits

As you'll realize after being harassed by touts every few paces along Nathan Road, Tsim Sha Tsui hosts an abundance of tailors specializing in making suits for visitors. Many produce excellent work, but bear a few things in mind: suits made in 24 hours tend to fall apart just as quickly (three days is a realistic minimum); prices for good work are good value but not cheap (expect to pay about the same as an off-the-peg suit at home); and you'll usually have to pay half the cost up front as a deposit.

travel guides in both English and Chinese, plus presentations by local travel writers and photographers.

Yue Hwa Chinese Products Emporium

1 Kowloon Park Drive. Long-standing department store specializing in Chinese souvenirs – everything from gift-wrapped medicines and tea to reproduction antique porcelain and massage chairs. Particularly good for clothing and trinkets.

Restaurants

Aqua

29th Floor and Penthouse, One Peking Rd ☎3427 2288. Mon–Thurs noon–2am, Fri–Sun 10.30am–2am. Enjoy superlative harbour views from the sunken slate tables, as you consume an unexpectedly successful blend of Italian and Japanese dishes. The atmosphere is informal, and the prices high – at least $400 a head.

Chao Inn

7th Floor, One Peking Rd ☎2369 8819. Daily 10am–10pm. The moderately priced food – mainly cuisine from Chaozhou in Guangdong province, featuring clear-skinned dumplings, seafood and roast meats – is a cut above average, especially the roast goose flavoured with sour plum, and harbour views are an added bonus.

D&J Shanghai

2nd Floor, Hanley House, 68–80 Canton Rd ☎3113 6993. Daily 11am–midnight. Good place for Shanghai cold dishes, hot meals, or just a quick snack of *xioalong bao* (tiny steamed pork buns). Slightly tourist-inflated prices – mains cost $50 and upwards.

Delhi Club

Block C, 3rd Floor, Chungking Mansions, 36–44 Nathan Rd ☎2368 1682. Daily noon–2.30pm & 6–11.30pm. A Nepali curry house with spartan surroundings, slap-down service, and an inexpensive set

▼ AQUA

▲ FELIX

meal that would feed an army. Also recommended for their vegetarian dishes, mutton and tandoori specialities and clay oven-cooked naan.

Felix

28th Floor, Peninsula Hotel, Salisbury Rd ⓣ2315 3188. Restaurant daily 6–11pm; bar daily 6pm–2am. Architect-designed restaurant with incredible views of Hong Kong Island which alone warrant a visit. The Eurasian menu is not as good as it should be at over $500 a head, but many people just come for a Martini at the bar.

First Cup of Coffee

12 Hankow Rd. Daily 7am–1am. Excellent coffee from around $15 a cup, plus home-made croissants, torte, biscuits and toasted sandwiches.

Itamae Sushi

14 Granville Rd; no phone. Daily 11.30am–midnight. Conveyor-belt sushi at the front, tables and full menus at the back, and fish tanks in between. Looks upmarket, but actually pretty reasonable at $10–40 per colour-coded plate of (almost entirely raw) seafood.

Light Vegetarian

Ground Floor, New Lucky House, 13 Jordan Rd ⓣ2384 2833. A big selection of tasty Cantonese and Shanghai vegetarian dishes, with everything made out of vegetables, gluten or tofu despite the names: sweet and sour "fish" (made from taro); a "bird's nest" basket with fried vegetables; "yin-yang" mushroom, corn and spinach soup; and "duck" (marinated, fried beancurd skin packets). Well worth it at around $55 a dish.

Mrs Chan

Basement, 63 Peking Rd ⓣ2368 8706. Daily 11.30am–10pm. Singapore-Malay home cooking, very good if you order the right things – including any of the seafood or satay dishes. Count on $120 a head.

Napa

21st Floor, Kowloon Shangri-La Hotel, Salisbury Rd ☎2733 8752. Daily noon–3pm & 6.30–11pm. Excellent Californian food in Art Deco surroundings, with possibly the best view of the harbour anywhere. Dining here is expensive (upwards of $400 a head), though a light lunch (Caesar salad, or grilled scallops, for instance) comes in at under $200.

Spoon

Inter-Continental Hotel, 18 Salisbury Rd ☎2313 2256. Daily 6pm–midnight. You'll either love or hate this expensive, cutting-edge French restaurant: they serve some intriguing dishes, with an unusual blend of cooking styles, ingredients and sauces used in each. Above $600 a head.

Spring Deer

1st Floor, 42 Mody Rd ☎2366 4012. Daily noon–10.30pm. Good-value place noted for its barbecued Peking duck (which is carved at the table) among a barrage of northern-Chinese favourites, such as baked fish on a hot plate, smoked chicken, and beancurd with minced pork. $150 a head.

Tao Heung

Floor 3, Silvercord Court, 30 Canton Rd (entrance beside cinema on Haiphong Rd) ☎2375 9128. Daily from 7.30am. First-rate and inexpensive *dim sum* restaurant where you'll need to come early for a window-seat facing Kowloon Park. Try the white radish cake, roast pork *sheung fan* (stuffed rice noodles), and the beef rissoles with celery.

Yan Toh Heen

Inter-Continental Hotel, 18 Salisbury Rd ☎2721 1211. Daily noon–2.30pm & 6–11pm. Reckoned to be one of Hong Kong's best for cutting-edge Cantonese cooking – and for the excellent service and amazing harbour views. Count on $800 a head for the works, though a $600 set-menu relieves the pain a little.

Bars and clubs

Bahama Mama's

4–5 Knutsford Terrace ☎2368 2121. Mon–Thurs 5pm–3am, Fri & Sat 5pm–4am, Sun 6pm–2am. The beach-bar theme and outdoor terrace attracts a party crowd, along with all their antics. One of the rare bars that is popular with both *gweilo*s and local Chinese; for the best crack, stump up the cover charge and come along on club nights where a mixed music policy offers everything from garage to world.

Ned Kelly's Last Stand

11a Ashley Rd ☎2376 0562. Daily 11.45am–1.45am. Dark Australian bar with great live traditional jazz after 9pm, plus good beer and meaty Aussie food served at the tables. It's a real favourite with travellers, and good fun.

Someplace Else

Basement, *Sheraton Hotel*, 20 Nathan Rd ☎2721 6151. Daily 11am–2am; happy hour 4–8pm. Upmarket singles bar, whose large, rowdy two-floor bar-restaurant has live music, free popcorn nibbles, Tex-Mex and Asian snacks and a good cocktail list.

Stag's Head

11 Hart Avenue ☎2369 3142. Daily noon–4am, happy hour daily noon–10pm. Popular pub attracting expats and tourists alike; almost

▲ NED KELLY'S LAST STAND

always has Britpop plus beer, spirit and wine promotions.

Watering Hole

Basement, 1A Mody Rd ☎2312 2288. Daily 4pm–1pm. An enormous subterranean bar with darts and a small selection of beers. The decor is nondescript, but there's a good mix of locals, expats and tourists, the bar staff are friendly, and it's big enough to harbour lots of dark nooks and crannies.

Kowloon: Yau Ma Tei and Mong Kok

Yau Ma Tei, north of Jordan Road, was one of the first areas to be built upon after the British acquired Kowloon in 1860. The bucolic name (loosely meaning "sesame fields") has long been redundant – the area being home to a grid of main roads and container port projects – though a vibrant night market, plus Hong Kong's largest jade market and a temple of some repute provide good reasons to come up this way. North of Yau Ma Tei, Mong Kok is one of the most densely populated areas in the world, its main roads and backstreets packed with decrepit tenement blocks where a good proportion of the Hong Kong people spend their lives in cramped, and occasionally grim, conditions. Despite all this – and a reputation as the heartland of Hong Kong's Triad gangs – Mong Kok is not a threatening place, and boasts several more excellent street markets. You can also buy electronic goods and accessories at lower prices than in Tsim Sha Tsui, and with less chance of being ripped off – though note that the district is at the heart of Hong Kong's massive pirated computer software industry.

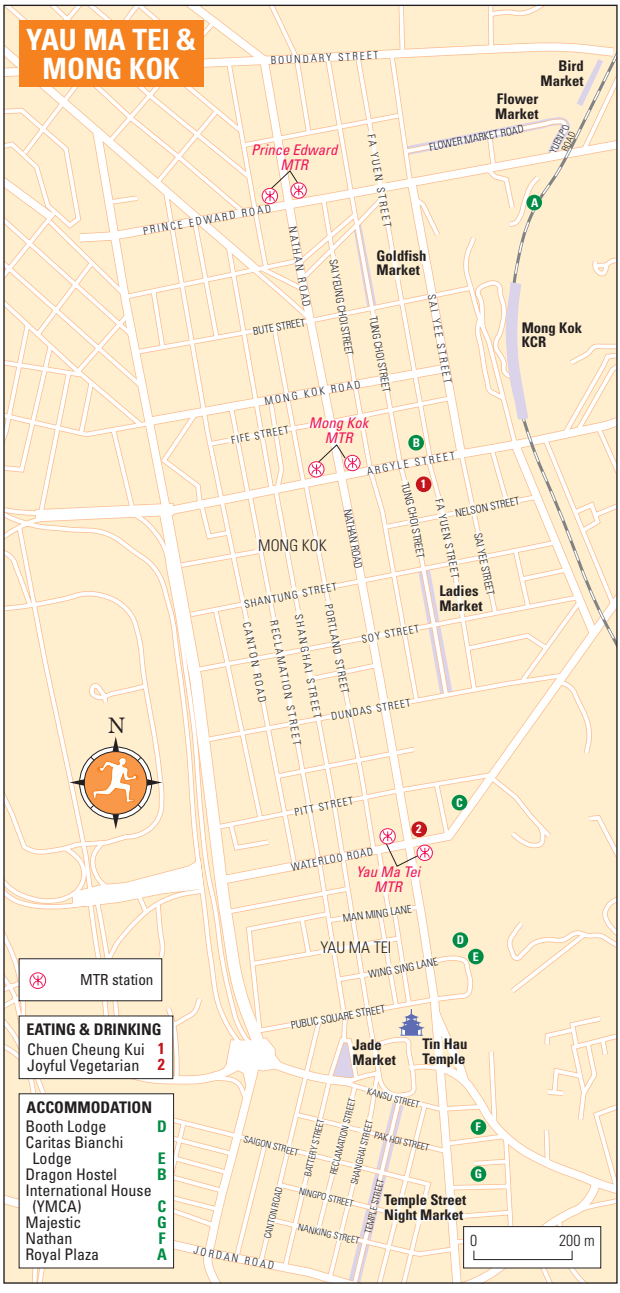
Mong Kok's northern limit is Boundary Street, which until 1898 and the acquisition of the New Territories marked the border with China.

Shanghai and Reclamation streets

The streets north off Jordan Road are interesting places to browse amongst some low-key businesses which serve the locals' daily needs. **Shanghai Street** contains an eclectic and attractive mix of shops and stalls selling items as diverse as bright-red Chinese wedding gowns, embroidered pillow cases, lacquered shrines, statuettes, chopping blocks, incense and kitchenware. To the west, **Reclamation Street** sports an intense produce market offering concrete proof that the Cantonese demand absolutely fresh food, with fish, frogs and turtles alive in tanks and buckets for shoppers to inspect.

Temple Street Night Market

Temple Street Night Market (daily 5–11pm) is the most famous market in Kowloon, crammed with stalls selling tourist-oriented gear, including clothes (for men particularly), Bruce Lee dolls and electrical knick-knacks, household goods, watches, cheap CDs and jewellery, while fortune-tellers


YAU MA TEI & MONG KOK
BOUNDARY STREET
Bird Market
Flower Market
FLOWER MARKET ROAD
Prince Edward MTR
PRINCE EDWARD ROAD
FA YUEN STREET
NATHAN ROAD
SAI YEUNG CHOI STREET
TUNG CHOI STREET
SAI YEE STREET
Goldfish Market
Mong Kok KCR
BUTE STREET
MONG KOK ROAD
FIFE STREET
Mong Kok MTR
ARGYLE STREET
NELSON STREET
MONG KOK
Ladies Market
SHANTUNG STREET
PORTLAND STREET
SHANGHAI STREET
RECLAMATION STREET
CANTON ROAD
SOY STREET
DUNDAS STREET
N
PITT STREET
WATERLOO ROAD
Yau Ma Tei MTR
MAN MING LANE
YAU MA TEI
WING SING LANE
PUBLIC SQUARE STREET
Jade Market
Tin Hau Temple
KANSU STREET
SAIGON STREET
BATTERY STREET
PAK HOI STREET
NINGPO STREET
NANKING STREET
JORDAN ROAD
Temple Street Night Market
0
200 m
MTR station
EATING & DRINKING
Chuen Cheung Kui 1
Joyful Vegetarian 2
ACCOMMODATION
Booth Lodge D
Caritas Bianchi Lodge E
Dragon Hostel B
International House (YMCA) C
Majestic G
Nathan F
Royal Plaza A

▲ TEMPLE STREET NIGHT MARKET

and herbalists set up stalls in the surrounding streets. If you're lucky, there'll also be impromptu performances of Cantonese opera. About halfway up the street you'll see an undercover area of alfresco **seafood restaurants** with wobbly tables and stools: a couple of plates of sea snails, prawns, mussels or clams, with a beer or two, won't be expensive (fish often is though – fix all prices in advance), and it's a great place to stop for a while and take in the atmosphere. Some of the stalls even have formal English menus, if you want to know exactly what you're getting.

▼ CAMERA SHOP, TEMPLE STREET NIGHT MARKET

The Jade Market

Kansu St, Yau Ma Tei. Daily 9am–6pm.

Yau Ma Tei's Jade Market features several hundred stalls selling an enormous selection of jade jewellery, statues and antique reproductions. In part, jade owes its value to the fact that it's a hard stone and very difficult to carve; it's also said by the Chinese to promote longevity and prevent decay (royalty used to be buried in jade suits made of thousands of tiny tiles held together with gold wire). There are basically two kinds of jade: nephrite (which can be varying shades of green), and the rarer jadeite, much of which comes from Burma and which can be all sorts of colours. A rough guide to quality is that the jade should be cold to the touch and with a pure colour that remains constant all the way through; coloured tinges or blemishes can reduce the value. However, unless you know your stuff, the scope for

▲ THE JADE MARKET

being misled is considerable, so it's more enjoyable to just poke around the stalls to see what turns up for a few dollars – note that all the serious buying is over before lunch.

Tin Hau Temple

Temple St, Yau Ma Tei. Daily 8am–6pm.

That Yau Ma Tei was once a working harbour is clear from the presence of the Tin Hau Temple, dedicated to the ubiquitous southern Chinese sea goddess. The small area fronting the complex is usually teeming with men sitting around or gambling at backgammon and mahjong, and people may ask for alms as you go in. The main hall, in typical heavy stone, is around a century old; of the three other halls here, the one to the left is dedicated to Shea Tan, protector of the local community, and the ones to the right to Shing Wong, the city god, and Fook Tak, an earth god.

The Ladies' and Goldfish markets

Two more interesting markets can be found in Mong Kok's Tung Choi Street. Between Dundas and Shantung streets, the crowded stalls of the Ladies' Market's (active from about 10am–5pm) sell mostly inexpensive clothing. North of Bute Street, the Goldfish Market (same hours) is one long, crowded run of shops festooned with all kinds of ornamental and tropical fish in tanks and fairground-like plastic bags, as well as the necessary accessories for displaying them in the home. Goldfish especially are a popular symbol of good fortune and wealth in China (the words "gold fish" sound the same as "gold surplus" in Chinese) and are believed to invoke a trouble-free life; you'll often see drawings of fish or fish-shaped lanterns in temples or on display during Chinese festivals. Consequently, great care is taken with their breeding, and some can cost thousands of dollars.

The Flower Market

A block northeast of the top end of Tung Choi Street is Flower Market Road. There are dozens of inexpensive flower and plant shops here (daily 10am–6pm), and at the weekend many more vendors bring in trucks full of orchids, orange trees and other exotica, crowding the narrow pavements with stalls. It's particularly good around Chinese New Year, when people come to buy narcissi, orange trees and plum blossom to decorate their apartments.

▼ THE FLOWER MARKET

The Bird Market

Yuen Po St, off Prince Edward Rd, Mong Kok. Daily 7am–8pm. Mong Kok's Bird Market is housed in a purpose-built Chinese-style garden. There are two or three dozen stalls crammed with caged songbirds, parakeets, mynah birds, live crickets tied up in little plastic bags (they're fed to the birds with chopsticks), birdseed barrels and newly made bamboo cages – minus bird these start at $60 or so, though the more elaborate ones run into the hundreds. Little porcelain bird bowls and other paraphernalia cost from around $10. It's interesting just to watch the local men who bring their own caged birds here for an airing and to listen to them sing; taking your songbird out for a walk is a popular pastime among older Chinese men, one you'll see often in the more traditional areas of Hong Kong.

Restaurants

Chuen Cheung Kui

91–95 Fa Yuen St, Mong Kok
☎2395 9370. Daily 11am–midnight.
Hakka cooking from China's Guangdong province – try the salt-baked chicken or tofu cubes stuffed with mince. Moderate prices make this a popular place with locals, and there's also an English menu.

Joyful Vegetarian

530 Nathan Rd, Yau Ma Tei
☎2780 2230. Daily 10am–11pm.
Inexpensive Chinese vegetarian meals, all beautifully presented – try the sweet and sour "fish" with pine nuts. Like most vegetarian establishments, it serves takeaway meals out front.

The New Territories

The 794 square kilometres between Kowloon and the Chinese border are known as the New Territories, home to just under half of the SAR's population. Dominating the landscape are the massive, purpose-built New Towns, their towering housing estates, streets and shopping malls often as busy and boisterous as anywhere in Hong Kong, though lacking the intense claustrophobia of Central or Kowloon. Yet hidden in amongst the New Towns are nineteenth-century temples, some fascinating museums and markets, and traditional walled villages which have managed to retain their old identities, and remain inhabited by the clans that built them.

The New Towns can't completely obscure the essentially rural nature of much of the New Territories, and although it's not as easy as it once was to spot water buffalo, some country roads still feature teeming duck farms and isolated houses. What's more, large parts of the New Territories have been designated country parks, offering excellent hiking, rock climbing and coastal walks; the easterly Sai Kung Peninsula is excellent for outdoor pursuits, while the adventurous could see the whole of the New Territories from a hiker's viewpoint by following the various cross-territory trails. Thanks to public buses and the KCR rail lines, there isn't any single destination in the New Territories that can't be reached on a day-trip from Hong Kong's downtown areas – which is fortunate considering the scarcity of hotel accommodation in the area, though hikers can make use of a couple of remote youth hostels (see p.152).

Wong Tai Sin Temple

Lung Cheung Rd. Wong Tai Sin MTR. Daily 7am–5.30pm. Small donation expected. Though lying just inside Kowloon, the lavishly decorated Wong Tai Sin Temple, built in 1921, is well worth a detour on your way into the New Territories. Wong Tai Sin ("Yellow Immortal") was a Taoist monk during the Jin Dynasty (265–420AD) who achieved enlightenment after forty years of meditation and became known for his healing

▼ WONG TAI SIN TEMPLE

powers. The temple is Hong Kong's major Taoist shrine, and some three million people visit annually to pay their respects, wish for long life and have their fortunes told. The temple's forecourt walls are lined with scores of fortune-tellers, who read palms, bumps, feet and faces; some speak English and many display testimonials from satisfied customers – if you want to find out your chances at the races, this is the place to ask.

Hiking trail information

Hiking maps and information for all country parks and trails covered below can be found at the Government Bookshop (see p.167), and online at ⓦ www.afcd.gov.hk. English-language bookshops also stock the pocket-sized *Hiker's Guide to Hong Kong*, with maps and trail accounts.

The main temple building with its statue of Wong Tai Sin is often closed, but kneeling crowds perpetually pack out the front courtyard, everyone burning incense and shaking pots full of numbered bamboo strips, known as "fortune sticks". When one falls out it's exchanged for a piece of paper bearing the same number, which has a prediction written on it. The busiest days at the temple are around Chinese New Year, when luck is particularly sought, and at Wong Tai Sin's festival, on the twenty-third day of the eighth lunar month (usually in September).

Behind the main building is the **Good Wish Garden** (Tues–Sun 9am–4pm; $2), with Chinese pavilions, carp ponds and waterfalls.

Lion Rock Country Park

Tai Wai KCR. Use "Che Kung Miu" exit, then follow Hung Mui Kuk Rd 900m to its end at the park entrance. Free. Lion Rock Country Park

▲ CHE KUNG TEMPLE

covers a wild ridge of hills just south of the town of Tai Wai, which physically splits the New Territories from Kowloon. The trail first heads up for about thirty minutes from the park entrance to Amah Rock (also known as Yearning for Husband Rock), said to be a woman who turned to stone waiting for her husband to return from fishing. Young women make the pilgrimage up here during the Maiden's Festival, held on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month (usually in August). From here, Lion Rock is a further hour: continue past a shelter at Kowloon Pass, then head left onto the MacLehose Trail (see p.118). Here you bear right at another smaller shelter, and then leave the path to scramble up to two peaks formed by the lion's "head" and "rump" – on a clear day the views over Kowloon and the harbour are superb. Lion Rock is also a popular spot for **rock climbing** – the best source of information on which is Ⓦ www.hongkongclimbing.com, which provides practical details for a score of routes in Hong Kong, and links to local clubs and climbing centres.

Che Kung Temple

Che Kung Temple KCR. Follow signs to the temple for 250m. Daily 9am–5pm. Free. The austere Che Kung Temple is worth a brief look on the way to the nearby Tsang Tai Uk village (see p.113). Dedicated to the Song Dynasty general Che Kung, who is – amongst other duties – the god of gamblers, the black-roofed stone building dates to 1993, its entrance marked by a crowd of fortune-tellers, palm readers and incense sellers. Inside, beyond the courtyard, is a ten-metre-high, aggressive-looking statue of the general with a drawn sword and a collection of brass fans, which people turn for luck.

Che Kung's festival is held on the third day of Chinese New Year (in January or February), when – gambling being so important to the Chinese – the temple is heaving with people coming here to pray for good luck.

▼ TSANG TAI UK

Tsang Tai Uk

Che Kung Temple KCR. Follow signs to the village for 500m. Small donation expected. Tsang Tai Uk (literally "The Tsangs' Mansion") is one of the New Territories' lesser-touristed walled clan villages, built by a Hakka family in the 1870s. Though it is somewhat dilapidated, a visit here provides an insight into how many of the New Territories' families used to live until skyscrapers and freeways began to dominate the area in the 1980s.

A triple gateway leads into the village, which includes a central courtyard, wide alleys, a network of high-ceilinged rooms and the shabby clan ancestral hall. The most obvious traditional feature is the four watchtowers at each corner of the outer wall, whose high, rounded eaves are adorned with spikes to keep bad luck away. The community is still active, the village's alleyways choked with bicycles, gas canisters, discarded furniture and drying washing.

Fortress-like clan villages are a Hakka speciality, as these people – concentrated today in Hong Kong and the southern Chinese provinces – were dislodged hundreds of years ago by warfare in their homelands in central China, and have never been sure of their welcome in places they subsequently settled. Indeed, *hakka* translates as "guest family", indicating their perpetual status as outsiders.

Sha Tin

Sha Tin – Sandy Fields – is a sprawling development built either side of the Shing Mun River; Sha Tin KCR is the station for the town itself. Home to more than half a million people, it's a good place to experience life in a New Town, especially in shopping malls such as New Town Plaza, which offers a view of modern local life and manners: it's solidly Chinese, with crowded shops and good-value restaurants full of local families.

Aside from the Ten Thousand Buddhas Monastery (see p.114), the town's best-known sight is the **Sha Tin**

New Towns

In 1898, when the **New Territories** were first leased to Britain, fewer than ten thousand farmers and fishermen lived in the area. Today, the regional population stands at some 3.5 million, mostly housed in nine New Towns, which were built in response to Hong Kong's population explosion in the decades following World War II. Each **New Town** is designed to be self-sufficient, and for the majority, they offer a better environment to live in than the crowded tenement slums of Mong Kok or the outer reaches of Kowloon. Although residential living space in the New Towns is similarly limited, more is provided here in the uncluttered layout of public amenities, civic and leisure services, shops, markets and transport infrastructure.

It's worth taking the time to look round a New Town, if only to see the environment in which most local people live, and what can be achieved in just a few years, given a coherent planning programme. Sha Tin is perhaps the most attractive example, since it's splendidly sited and has had time to acquire a certain character. The most dramatic development, though, is occurring opposite the airport at Tung Chung on Lantau Island's north shore (the first New Town outside the New Territories); although still under construction, it's slated to become a major residential and business centre in its own right.

▲ A NEW TOWN

Racecourse (Racecourse KCR; open race days only; ⓦwww.shatinracetrack.com), some 3km northeast. Along with Happy Valley, this is the only legal outlet for betting in Hong Kong, despite the local Chinese obsession with wagering varying amounts of their pay packet. It's packed on race days during the season (Sept–June), with meetings held on Wednesday evenings or Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Entry is $10, or you can visit with the Hong Kong Tourist Board's **Come Horseracing Tour** ($540–790 depending on the event), which gets you into VIP-only parts of the enclosure: you need to be over 18 and have been in Hong Kong for less than three weeks – take your passport to any HKTB office at least a day before the race. The biggest annual event is the Hong Kong Derby in March, a two-kilometre race for four-year-olds, which attracts an international crowd.

The Hong Kong Heritage Museum

Man Lam Rd, Sha Tin. Signed 600m walk from Sha Tin or Che Kung Temple KCR stations ⓦwww.heritagemuseum.gov.hk. Mon & Wed–Sat 10am–6pm, Sun & public holidays 10am–7pm. $10, Wed free. The Hong Kong Heritage Museum is the SAR's largest museum, though it's really of more interest for its travelling shows – which tend to showcase excellent and informative collections of Chinese art and historical artefacts – than its lacklustre permanent exhibitions. The best of these is the Cantonese Opera Heritage Hall, full of flamboyant costumes, embroidered shoes, stage props, and mock-ups of traditional stage sets. The Gallery of Chinese Art features fine Chinese ceramics, bronze, jade, lacquerware and stone sculptures; while the New Territories Heritage Hall has archeological remains dating back to 4000 BC, accounts of Hong Kong's various Chinese ethnic groups, plus information about ancestral worship, feasts and festivals.

The Ten Thousand Buddhas Monastery

Sha Tin KCR. Follow signs for 800m. Daily 10am–5pm. Free. The Ten Thousand Buddhas Monastery is an appealingly shabby temple

▲ THE TEN THOUSAND BUDDHAS MONASTERY

dating from the 1960s, set at the peak of Po Fook Hill. About four hundred steep steps ascend to the monastery from behind the Grand Central Plaza Shopping Centre, lined by five hundred life-sized, gilded statues of Buddhist saints. You emerge onto a terrace beside the main temple, which has an undistinguished exterior but houses around thirteen thousand small black-and-gold Buddha statues, each about a foot high and sculpted in a different posture, lining the walls to a height of thirty feet or more. The building also contains the embalmed and gilded body of a monk, the founder of the monastery. Outside on the terrace there's a small pagoda, along with some shoddy, brightly painted concrete statues of Chinese deities, including a lion and elephant (representing the Buddhist gods of Wisdom and Benevolence). Vegetarian lunches are also available, either off the menu or from a better-value canteen selection.

Tai Po

Tai Po Market KCR. Tai Po, near the east coast halfway to the Chinese border, has been a market town since the seventeenth century. Though it's developing rapidly, a few sights remain and it's conveniently close to the countryside at Plover Cove.

For train enthusiasts, the **Hong Kong Railway Museum** (Shun Tak St, 800m to the right from the station via Nam Wan Rd, Wan Tau St, Heung Sze Wui St, Po Heung St, Wai Yi St and On Fu Rd ; Mon & Wed–Sun 9am–5pm; free) has a small exhibition of photographs and restored coaches dating back to 1911. More traditional sights include the beautiful **Man Mo Temple** (Fu Shin St, near the museum off On Fu Rd; dawn to dusk; free), a shrine to the Taoist gods of War and Literature, surrounded by interesting old shops selling dried seafood, religious paraphernalia and other Chinese wares. Towards the main altar, prayers have been written on red plastic plaques dangling inside the enormous hanging incense coils, which can burn for weeks.

North of the Lam Tsuen River the town's **Tin Hau Temple** (Ting Kok Rd; free) was built around three hundred years ago and reflects Tai Po's traditional importance as a fishing centre. It's also one of the main venues for celebration and devotion during the annual **Tin Hau festival** (see p.165), when the whole place is decorated with streamers, banners and little windmills: if your visit coincides you can catch Cantonese opera

▲ PLOVER COVE COUNTRY PARK

performances on a temporary stage over the road.

Plover Cove and Pat Sin Leng country parks

Plover Cove Country Park occupies a rugged east coast peninsula north of Plover Cove Reservoir, whose dam wall has turned a former marine bay into one of Hong Kong's major water sources. The access point is **Tai Mei Tuk** hamlet (bus #75K from Tai Po Market KCR), comprising a clutch of houses, food and drink stalls, the *Bradbury Lodge Youth Hostel*, and a visitors' centre (Mon, Wed–Sun 9.30–11.30am & 1.30–4.30pm) providing hiking advice. From here you can either follow the road around the reservoir or hike cross-country for 5km to Bride's Pool, a pretty series of forested waterfalls, popular with picnickers. Other trails from here continue downriver a few kilometres to Chung Mei, an abandoned village once populated by farmers and scallop gatherers; and 5km north to the shores of Starling Inlet, from where you can return to Tai Mei Tuk via Pat Sin Leng's pathways (see below).

Tai Mei Tuk is also the starting point for hikes into **Pat Sin Leng Country Park** – the name means "Eight Immortals Peak" and the trails through it follow a string of ridges north to Starling Inlet (around 10km) or west and then south back to Tai Po (15km). The hikes are great exercise and have fabulous coastal views, as the hilltops are bare granite, with low shrubs on upper slopes and lightly wooded lowlands. Neither requires special skills, beyond being reasonably fit – gradients are steep, so take plenty of water.

Sheung Shui

Sheung Shui KCR. Sheung Shui is only 3km from the Chinese border, and is worth a visit as an unpretentious place where you can see ordinary people going about their daily activities. The main part is **Shek Wu Hui**, an interconnected block of streets typifying a down-to-earth New Territories' market town, a jumble of cheap clothes stalls, herbalists' shops, canteens and Hakka women on their way to market laden down with goods and bags. The food market off the main San Fung Avenue is excellent but not for the squeamish; it's stuffed with fruit and vegetables, preserved eggs and live fish, crabs and prawns, and freshly slaughtered fowl.

▲ SAM TANG UK

The other part of Sheung Shui is **Po Sheung Tsuen**, the original village over to the west. It's an almost medieval raggle-taggle of buildings with dank alleys between the houses, just wide enough for one person to walk down. The houses are a strange mixture, some brand-new with bright tiling, others just corrugated iron and cheap plaster. The eighteenth-century **Liu Man Shek Tong** ancestral hall (Wed & Thurs, Sat & Sun, 9am–1pm & 2–5pm; free) is the only sight here as such, still in use by the locals and retaining its original crumbly surroundings, carved and decorated in traditional fashion.

Mai Po Marshes

Best visited between October and May, the Mai Po Marshes are a site of international importance for migratory waterfowl such as Dalmatian pelicans and black-faced spoonbills. One access point – for dedicated birders only – is the isolated **Mai Po Nature Reserve** near Mai Po village, run by the WWF (☎2526 4473, ⓦwww.wwf.org.hk/eng/maipo; a taxi from Sheung Shui KCR costs about $60), with floating hides for bird-watching.

The other place worth seeing is the **Hong Kong Wetland Park** near Tin Shui Wai (☎3152 2666, ⓦhttp://afcdnewsite.sunnyvision.com/others/wetlandpark/html-en/index-en.htm; Tin Shui Wai KCR and then Light Rail to Wetland Park), a more accessible but contrived area of reclaimed ponds looking across to highrise developments over in China, with boardwalks, hides and a comprehensive information centre.

Sam Tung Uk Museum

Kwu Uk Lane, Tsuen Wan. Follow signs from Tsuen Wan MTR for 100m. Wed–Sun 9am–5pm. Free. Sam Tung Uk Museum is an eighteenth-century Hakka walled village, founded by a clan from China's Fujian province. As the New Town of Tsuen Wan went up around it in the 1980s, the villagers moved out and it became a museum, unlike Hong Kong's several accessible Hakka villages which are still lived in today.

The name means "three-beamed dwelling", after the three-roofed halls that form the central axis, onto which new housing was added as the village grew; there's a common room for villagers; a central hall for banquets and gatherings; and an ancestral hall painted bright red and green, which faces the main entrance. The village's separate buildings are connected by narrow lanes – open-air corridors really – and display traditional farming implements, some beautiful blackwood furniture, and more functional

chairs, tables, cooking utensils and cleaning tools (all sourced from contemporary villages in China). Outside, the gardens have been landscaped to show where there would have been a threshing ground and a fish pond, and there's a gatehouse beyond, which would have guarded the entrance to the village.

Tai Mo Shan

Train to Tsuen Wan MTR, then bus #51 from the Tai Ho Rd flyover behind the station, to the junction of Route Twisk and Tai Mo Shan Rd. Looming high above Tsuen Wan, at 957m Tai Mo Shan is Hong Kong's highest peak, contained inside **Tai Mo Shan Country Park**. The trail to the peak starts on Route Twisk, the road running west of the mountain. Ten minutes up adjacent Tai Mo Shan Road is a visitors' centre (Mon, Wed–Sun 9.30am–4.30pm; ☎2498 9326) with details of all the local trails; there's also accommodation if you walk further up Tai Mo Shan Road at *Sze Lok Yuen Youth Hostel* (see p.153; 30min). The exposed, three-hour climb along a concrete track to the peak takes in broad views south over Kowloon; at the top you're just off the **MacLehose Trail**, 22km from its western end at Tuen Mun.

Kam Tin

Kam Sheung Rd KCR. Kam Tin township is famous for its outlying walled villages, though these are not now particularly traditional. **Kat Hing Wai** (take exit B from the KCR, cross the small footbridge, turn left and follow Kam Sheung Rd to the intersection, turn right onto Kam Tin Rd and walk for 100m; daily 9am–5pm; $1) is the best known, with square walls and a moat, and has been inhabited for four hundred years by the Tang clan. It was infamous as a centre of resistance to the British takeover of the New Territories in 1898, for which the iron gates of the village were confiscated – they were returned in 1925 after having been found in Ireland. Today, Kat Hing Wai is somewhat commercialized, its buildings badly restored, and the main street lined with souvenir stalls and Hakka ladies posing for photos in traditional garb.

About 600m north over a canal from here on Shui Tau Road, **Shui Tau Tsuen** village is bigger, though new building

The MacLehose Trail

The **MacLehose Trail** is a hundred-kilometre-long hiking route west from Pak Tam Chung on the Sai Kung Peninsula to the New Town of Tuen Mun, divided into ten different stages. In addition to 21 campsites (concentrated mostly around the Sai Kung Peninsula end of the trail; see ⓦ www.afcd.gov.hk for facilities and locations), there are three IYHF youth hostels near the trail: *Sze Lok Yuen* hostel at Tai Mo Shan, and *Bradbury Hall* and *Pak Sha O* hostels on the Sai Kung Peninsula (see p.152–53) – all accommodation must be booked in advance. You could do the whole trail in four or five days, but most people take it more slowly, particularly in the summer heat. The terrain is largely steep, bare or lightly vegetated hillsides with spectacular views (especially of the easternmost sections' coast, with brilliant blue sea, secluded beaches and rugged hilltops); lower valleys and gulleys have pockets of forest.

▲ CLEARWATER BAY

on the outskirts has destroyed the sense of a walled settlement, and many of the old buildings are decrepit. The elegant carved roofs are still apparent, though, and a walk around the tight alleys reveals an ancestral hall and the elderly Tin Hau Temple.

Clearwater Bay

Bus #91 (#91R on Sundays) from Diamond Hill MTR. Clearwater Bay is a broad inlet at the mainland's southeastern extremity. **Tai Au Mun** is the only settlement, boasting two beaches, the small #1 and the much bigger #2, the latter 5km to the south and packed with weekend crowds.

From the bus stop at beach #2, follow the road uphill for 500m to where a marked path leads up onto the peninsula's exposed ridge and runs for about 3km, providing marvellous seascapes before you descend to the venerable **Tin Hau Temple** on Joss House Bay. This is a major site for Hong Kong's annual Tin Hau celebrations (see p.165), but is otherwise a quiet and simple whitewashed structure, whose entrance is guarded by two stone lions: turn the balls in their mouths three times for luck.

The Sai Kung Peninsula

The Sai Kung Peninsula encompasses 75 square kilometres of unpolluted headlands, coves, woodland and beaches in Hong Kong's easternmost reaches. Some parts are very wild, but there are also marked paths and lots of quiet places for a picnic, despite the peninsula's increasing popularity. **Sai Kung town** (bus #92 from Diamond Hill MTR or Choi Hung MTR) is the main gateway, a pleasant blend of fishing port and low-key tourist retreat with a daily fish market (6–11am), some good seafood restaurants serving "bamboo fish", and a few bars. You can catch *kaidos* (on-demand ferries) from the jetty here to nearby islands and beaches; the most popular trip is the short run across to **Kiu Tsui Chau** (Sharp Island, about $25 return), whose small main beach at Hap Mun Bay, hemmed in by green headlands, is one of the prettiest in the area, although prone to weekend crowds.

Bus #94 (daily 6.30am–9pm) runs from Sai Kung's bus terminus to Pak Tam Chung, start of the MacLehose Trail and site of the **Sai Kung Peninsula visitors' centre** (Mon, Wed–Sun

▲ KCR TRAIN

9.30am–4.30pm; ⓣ2792 7365) and nearby **Sheung Yiu Folk Museum** (Mon, Wed–Sun 9am–4pm; free), based around an abandoned, traditional walled village. The first stage of the MacLehose Trail runs southeast from here around the High Island Reservoir, an easy walk along a vehicle track – the man-made "water and hills" scenery is a little bland, however.

The Sai Kung Peninsula's north coast is fairly inaccessible, though it can be seen easily enough by riding the ferry (daily 8.30am & 3pm, extra departure 10.35am Sat & Sun; $25) through the Tolo Channel to Tap Mun Chau island from **Ma Liu Shui jetty** (a signposted ten-minute walk from University KCR). The 75-minute ride makes for a fine trip to soak up the views: the early morning departure calls at isolated bays along Sai Kung's northern coast. There's not much to do on grassy **Tap Man Chau** island, however, except get lunch at one of the cheap restaurants near the pier; there's no accommodation on the island, so don't miss the last boat back.

Restaurants

Chuan Hu Xiao Chi

Tai Ming Lane, Tai Po ⓣ2657 6838. Daily 11am–10pm. Just off the main square towards the Tai Po Hotel, this kitsch little restaurant with green booths, sunflower-yellow walls and wooden tables serves inexpensive, tasty Sichuan- and Shanghai-inspired *dim sum*.

Lung Wah

Wo Che St, Sha Tin ⓣ2691 1594. Daily 10.30am–10.30pm. This place serves greasy pigeon – a Cantonese speciality – plus beancurd and almond desserts. The restaurant is inexpensive and traditional, with a garden full of mahjong players at outdoor tables, and gets packed at the weekend.

Tung Kee Seafood

Waterfront, Sai Kung. Their speciality is "bamboo fish": carp, stuffed with preserved turnip and chargrilled outside on a hand-rotated bamboo pole, at around $150 a head.

Lantau

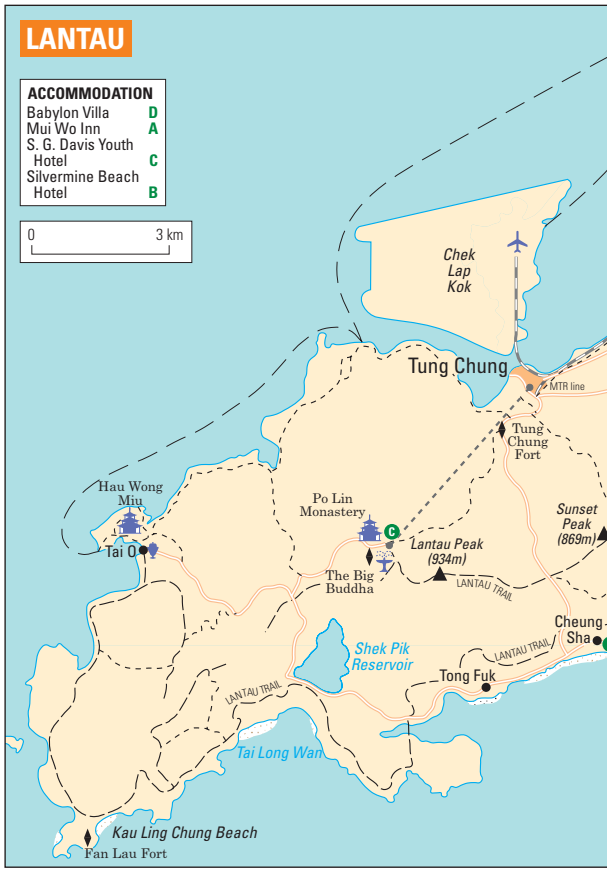
Twice the size of Hong Kong Island, Lantau has enough sights to merit a couple of full days' exploration. The site of Hong Kong's international airport, it also sports some excellent beaches, rugged countryside criss-crossed by hiking trails, and the recently opened Disneyland. More traditional offerings include Po Lin Monastery, boasting the world's largest seated bronze Buddha statue situated outdoors, old forts at Tung Chang and Fan Lau and the unusual fishing village of Tai O, which is built in part of corrugated iron – about as far as from the usual hi-tech image of Hong Kong as it's possible to get. Day-trips are easy, but you can also stay the night at several places (see p.153).

Mui Wo to Discovery Bay

All ferries from Hong Kong Island dock at **Mui Wo** ("Plum Cove"), also known as Silvermine Bay. This is the least interesting place on Lantau, but it's an important bus terminus, with some pleasant accommodation and restaurants, and also marks the eastern end of the **Lantau Trail** (see box, p.124).

Lantau's best short hike (3hr) is northeast from Mui Wo over the hills, via a Trappist monastery, to Discovery Bay. Head along the seafront Tung Wan Tau Road to the end, cross the bridge over the river and follow the sandy bay round to the right. A signpost eventually points up some steps onto the bare hills, with some excellent views along the way over to Hong Kong Island. The Trappist monastery is not open to the public, so follow the road past it downhill to a signposted path towards **Discovery Bay**. This New Town is a too-perfect copy of idealized middle-American suburbia, with happy blonde families zipping about in golf carts, and very few Chinese

▼ SILVERMINE BAY, MUI WO



Visiting Lantau

The main way to reach Lantau is by ferry from Hong Kong Island, but the MTR is more convenient if you're heading for Tung Chung or Disneyland. Once here, local buses connect major sites, as do the island's pale blue taxis.

Ferries to Mui Wo, on the island's east coast, depart from the Outer Islands Ferry Piers in Central every thirty minutes between 6.10am and 12.30am. Roughly every third sailing is by ordinary ferry (55min; Mon–Sat $11.30, Sun $16.70), while the rest are fast ferries (40min; Mon–Sat $22.20, Sun $32). Buy tickets before you travel at ticket offices at the pier. For **ferry information**, contact Hong Kong and Kowloon Ferry Ltd (☎ 2815 6063, ⓦ www.nwffl.com.hk).

MTR services operate approximately from 6am to 1am: from Central, it takes thirty-five minutes to Disneyland and forty minutes to Tung Chung.

faces. The main attraction is a 24-hour hydrofoil back to Central ($27; 30min); there are also buses to the rest of the island.

Hong Kong Disneyland

Ⓦwww.hongkongdisneyland.com. Daily 10am–8pm. Mon–Fri $295, children $170; Sat & Sun $350/200. Yan O/Disneyland MTR. The world's newest and smallest Disneyland, this theme park is worth a visit if you've time to kill between flights, but compared with Disney's ten other franchises is a bit tame, and queues can also be a drag. It's split into four zones: **Main Street USA**, a re-created early-twentieth-century mid-American shopping street (though the goods on sale are distinctly Chinese); **Adventureland**, home to Tarzan's treehouse (made of fake bamboo) and a jungle river cruise; **Tomorrowland**, whose excellent rides include a blacked-out rollercoaster; and **Fantasyland**, populated

The Lantau Trail

More than half of Lantau is designated country park, and the circular **Lantau Trail** loops for 70km around its southern half, passing ten campsites and the island's two youth hostels along the way. For detailed information on the trail's twelve stages, including campsite details, check out ⓦwww.afcd.gov.hk, the Country Parks Authority's website; the *Lantau Trail* leaflet (available at the ferry pier in Mui Wo); or *Hiker's Guide to Hong Kong*, available in English-language bookshops. Don't underestimate the steep, exposed trails – take a hat, sunscreen and water. The nine-kilometre section from Mui Wo to Sunset Peak (about 7hr return) gives a good taste of the whole trail: an initially wooded path which climbs to open highlands of thin pasture and stony slopes, with magnificent views down to the coast at every turn. Other good sections are the ten-kilometre easy walk (3hr) above the coast between Fan Lau and Tai O, and trails along the south coast covered below.

by a host of Disney characters, and whose best feature is the PhilharMagic 3D film show.

The south coast

Lantau's best beaches line the south coast. All of them are accessible on foot from Mui Wo along the Lantau Trail, or by bus #1 or #2 (to Tai O and Po Lin Monastery respectively from Mui Wo) as far as Shek Pik Reservoir. Closest to Mui Wo is **Pui O** beach (9km; 3hr on foot), an excellent spot with barbecue pits and a free campsite. The next beach along is **Cheung Sha** (5km; 1hr 30min from Pui O on foot), Hong Kong's longest stretch of sand at 2km, partly shaded with casuarina trees and with several low-key restaurants and bars. Further west, the road strikes inland to the **Shek Pik Reservoir** (13km; 4hr on foot), landscaped to provide picnic areas and walking trails; you can also just glimpse the Big Buddha from here. From Shek Pik there's a walking track (20min) to another shady beach at **Tai Long Wan**, from where you can agin pick up the Lantau Trail for 5km/1.5hr to **Fan Lau**, an abandoned, overgrown village at Lantau's southwestern headland, where the remains of a 1300-year-old rectangular fort overlook a stunning crescent bay, and bright green lagoons at the back of beautiful Kau Ling Chung beach.

Pink dolphins

Hong Kong's waters are home to the world's entire population of **pink dolphins** (a subspecies of the Indo-Pacific humpbacked dolphin), currently estimated at 180 animals. Mostly seen off western Lantau, their low numbers are thought to be the result of a combination of increasingly polluted waters and over-fishing. Trips to see them are run by Hong Kong Dolphinwatch (ⓣ2984 1414, ⓦwww.hkdolphinwatch.com; 5hr; $320 for adults, $160 for children), part of the profits from which go the WWF to support dolphin research projects. While the trips could potentially disrupt the dolphins, Dolphinwatch believes that the tours form only a tiny amount of local marine traffic, and might hopefully increase awareness about these endangered animals.

▲ TAI O

Tai O

Bus #1 from Mui Wo, #11 from Tung Chung, or #21 from Po Lin Monastery.

The largest and oldest village on Lantau, Tai O is home to two thousand people. There's plenty of interest in its old lanes, including shrines, temples, and a quarter full of tin-roofed stilt-houses built over the water. From the bus stop, you cross a small bridge onto the main street, which is lined by people selling dried and live seafood, and there's also a tiny **museum** (daily 9am–5pm, free), displaying everyday artefacts such as washboards, the prows from a Dragon Boat, a threshing machine and a cutlass. At the bridge, operators offer short boat trips around the nearby inlets, to see the village from the water ($10–25 depending on where you want to go).

The pick of the village's temples is **Hau Wong Miu** (free) on Kat Hing Back Street, about two minutes' walk from the bridge. Built in 1699, it contains the local boat used in the annual Dragon Boat Races (see p.166), some shark bones, a whale head found by Tai O fishermen, and a lovely carved roof-frieze displaying two roaring dragons.

Po Lin Monastery

Ngong Ping. Daily 10am–6pm. Bus #2 from Mui Wo, #21 from Tai O or #23 from Tung Chung.

Po Lin Monastery sits at the terminus of the cable-car from Tung Chung (see p.126), just below Lantau Peak. The complex is much grander than is usual in

▼ BIG BUDDHA

Hong Kong, and houses a noted group of statues of the Buddha – all three of which are fairly restrained given their setting, at around only three metres high. There's nothing at all restrained about the temple itself, though, which is painted and sculpted in gaudy colours. Inside the main courtyard, a huge **dining hall** (11.30am–5pm; set meals $60–100) is continually awash with diners filling up on vegetarian meals.

All this pales into insignificance besides the gigantic **Big Buddha** (daily 10am–5.30pm; free), at the top of a flight of steps in front of the monastery. Completed in 1993, the bronze figure seated in a ring of outsized lotus petals is 34m high and weighs 250 tonnes. Climb the steps for supreme views over the surrounding hills and down to the temple complex. The nearby *S.G. Davis Youth Hostel*, about 500m along the Lantau Peak track, makes a convenient base for a dawn ascent of the peak.

Lantau Peak

The 934-metre Lantau Peak – more properly known as Fung Wong Shan – is the second highest in Hong Kong, and a popular place to watch the sunrise. The steep, two-kilometre trail from Po Lin to the summit takes about an hour to complete, and on a clear day the views reach as far as Macau. You can pick up the Lantau Trail here and continue 5km (2hr 30min) east to the slightly lower **Tai Tung Shan**, or "Sunset Peak", from where it's a further hour to Mui Wo (see p.121).

Tung Chung

There are two reasons to visit Tung Chung, a burgeoning New Town near the airport on Lantau's north coast: to ride the **cable-car** to Po Lin Monastery, nicknamed "Ngong Ping 360" (Mon–Fri 10am–6pm, Sat & Sun 10am–6.30pm; $58 one-way, $88 return); and for a look at **Tung Chung Fort**, signposted 2km west of the centre on Yu Tung Road. The crenellated stone walls (currently surrounding a school) date back to 1817, and were built on the orders of the viceroy of Guangdong province to defend Lantau's northern coast.

Other islands

The Hong Kong SAR encompasses some 260-odd islands, the vast majority of which are tiny, barren and uninhabited. Lantau aside, Lamma, Cheung Chau and Peng Chau are the pick, being uncluttered and relatively laid-back, though hardly uncharted territory – all had been settled by the Chinese long before the British arrived.

One major draw is the beaches, at least for sunbathing – local pollution means that swimming is often not an option (signs in English at beaches give levels for the day and state whether swimming is allowed). Lamma and Cheung Chau are also noted for their seafood restaurants and food stalls, while villages offer a slice of traditional Chinese life. If nothing else, the islands make excellent escapes from city stress; acccommodation is available on all of them (see p.153).

Lamma

Lamma is an elongated fourteen-square-kilometres of land inhabited by five thousand people, with well-marked paths linking its settlements to small beaches, green hilltops, and pleasant seascapes. **Yung Shue Wan** is a pretty, tree-shaded village at the northwestern end of the island where the bulk of Lamma's residents live, and the main ferry terminus. There's a gloomy, century-old Tin Hau temple here but otherwise nothing to stop you beginning the walk across the island. Twenty minutes along a good concrete path is **Hung Shing Ye**, where there's a tiny, shaded sand beach with barbecue pits, a couple of places to eat and drink, and unfortunately close views of the power station. The path continues around the beach and up the hill on the other side, before levelling out at a viewing point marked by a Chinese pavilion. Carry on down the hill, past the vast cement works to your left, to some houses, from where sidetracks lead to **Lo So Shing**, another beach with changing rooms, showers, a snack kiosk and more barbecue pits.

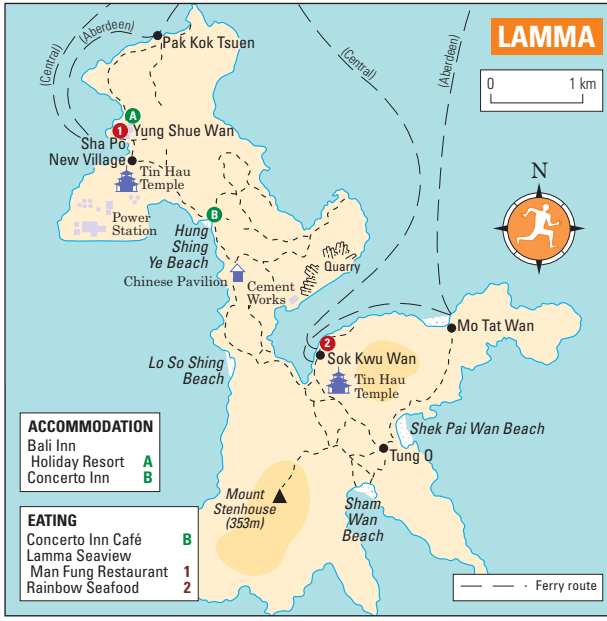
At the end of the main path (around 5km, or 1hr 30min on foot from Yung Shue Wan), **Sok Kwu Wan** is a fish-farming

Visiting Lamma

Ferries to Yung Shue Wan depart from the Outer Islands Ferry Piers in Central (Mon–Sat 6.30am–12.30am, Sun 7.30am–12.30am; 30min; $15).

Ferries to Sok Kwu Wan depart from the Outer Islands Ferry Piers in Central (daily 7.20am–11.30pm; 25min; $15).

Buy tickets before you travel from the ticket offices at the pier. For **ferry information**, contact Hong Kong and Kowloon Ferry Ltd (☎2815 6063, 🌐www.hkkf.com.hk).



village and second ferry terminus for Hong Kong Island; floating wooden frames cover the water, interspersed with rowing boats, junks and the canvas shelters of the fishermen and women. There's another Tin Hau temple here by the main pier, along which Sok Kwu Wan's **seafood restaurants** form a line, with outdoor tables overlooking the bay, and large fish tanks set back on the street. Some restaurants have English menus, but always ask the price first, particularly if you're choosing your fish straight from the tank.

Walking tracks link Sok Kwu Wan, via the small village of **Mo Tat Wan**, to spacious **Shek Pai Wan beach** on Lamma's southeastern coast – about an hour's walk in all. There's also a trail from Sok Kwu Wan up to the summit of **Mount Stenhouse** (also known as Shan Tei Tong), 353m up in the middle of the island's southwestern bulge – it's a two-hour hike each way, with fine views as the reward.

▼ WALKING TRAIL, LAMMA

Visiting Cheung Chau

Ferries to Cheung Chau depart from the Outer Islands Ferry Piers in Central (daily 24hr; 40–55min; ordinary ferry Mon–Sat $11.30, Sun $16.70; fast ferry Mon–Sat $22.20, Sun $32).

Buy tickets before you travel from ticket offices at the pier. For **ferry information**, contact the New World First Ferry Company (☎2131 8181, ⓦwww.nwff.com.hk).

Cheung Chau

Cheung Chau - "Long Island" – was the stronghold of the Qing Dynasty pirate Cheung Po Tsai. Along with his forty thousand followers, he terrorized shipping and villages along the adjacent Chinese coast, reputedly hiding his booty in a cave at Cheung Chau's southern end. After surrendering to government forces in 1810, he was appointed head of the local Chinese navy.

Today, Cheung Chau is the most densely populated of the outlying islands, and its streets and harbour are busy day and night. Walking tracks lead to the requisite beaches and seascapes, but the main attractions are

▲ PAK TAI TEMPLE, CHEUNG CHAU

watching the thriving traditional life in the main village, with its fishing boats and stalls, and – as ever – sampling local seafood.

Ferries dock at **Cheung Chau Village**, where the island's population and activity is concentrated. The waterfront road hosts a large daily market (busy all day), where fishermen, fruit-and-veg sellers and cultivated-pearl traders rub shoulders. Just beyond the pier, down Tung Wan Road, you'll see an ancient banyan tree, whose base is often cluttered with makeshift altars.

One block in from the water on San Hing Street, the **Pak Tai Temple** (free) is dedicated to the "Northern Emperor", protector against floods. Inside is an 800-year-old iron sword believed to bring luck to fishermen, and a gilded sedan chair, for carrying the god's statue during festivals. The temple is the venue for the vibrant annual four-day **Cheung Chau Bun Festival**, held to placate the vengeful spirits of those killed by Cheung Chau's pirates (see p.165). North of the village, various paths lead up to a hilltop reservoir and views over the whole island.

From the village, crossing east over the narrow middle of the island lands you at the long **Tung Wan beach** and, around the southern headland, **Kwun Yam Wan beach**, the best on the island. Alternatively, for a two-hour walk from the village, follow the shore southwest from the ferry pier to a pavilion overlooking the harbour and a landscaped picnic area. Behind this is a side-path

▼ BOATS, PENG CHAU HARBOUR

Visiting Peng Chau

Ferries to Peng Chau depart from the Outer Islands Ferry Piers in Central (daily 7am–midnight; 25–40min; ordinary ferry Mon–Sat $11.30, Sun $16.70; fast ferry Mon–Sat $22.20, Sun $32).
Buy tickets before boarding at the pier's ticket office. For **ferry information**, contact the New World First Ferry Company (☎2131 8181, ⓦ www.nwff.com.hk).

down between the rocks onto a small rocky beach and up to a headland covered in large, rounded granite boulders, which has some superb views over the sea on a calm day. The path continues down to **Pak Tso Wan beach** – small and sandy, though a little grubby – and then into the shady lanes on the village outskirts, which you can follow northeast to Kwun Yam Wan beach.

Peng Chau

Peng Chau is a tiny horseshoe-shaped blob of land with little obvious attraction beyond some quiet streets. Wing On Street, just back from the pier, is typical: part market, part residential, with an eighteenth-century Tin Hau temple, noodle shops, Chinese herbalists and no traffic. Some shops sell hand-painted porcelain, a local cottage industry. **Tung Wan**, the island's only real beach, is a bit gritty but there are outstanding views of nearby Lantau and shipping lanes from the island's **peak**, a fifteen-minute walk up stone steps from the back of town. Really, though, Peng Chau's main appeal is a meal at one of its many low-key seafood restaurants, where the food is as good and as cheap as on any of the islands.

Restaurants

Most of the following open daily mid-morning and close by 9pm, according to whether they still have customers. At all alfresco businesses, make sure you fix prices when ordering to avoid rip-offs.

Concerto Inn Café

Hung Shing Ye beach, Lamma ☎2982 1668, ⓦ www.concertoinn.com.hk.
Near a small and quiet beach, this hotel restaurant is set on a delightful terrace and serves an eclectic range of Southeast Asian dishes. Mains from $60.

▼ SEAFOOD RESTAURANT, CHEUNG CHAU

Hong Kee

Cheung Chau waterfront. Waterfront tables overlooking all sorts of small craft, serving delicious garlic-fried prawns, scallops and quick-fried fish pieces. Inexpensive to moderately priced.

Kam Gun

Near the banyan tree, Cheung Chau Village. Daily 7am–noon. Excellent *dim sum* on the first floor, served in a crowded, noisy Chinese environment – there's no English sign or menus, but it's easy to find. Inexpensive.

Lamma Seaview Man Fung Restaurant

Near the pier, Yung Shue Wan, Lamma ☎2982 0719. Pleasant views from outdoor tables under beach umbrellas. Fresh crab, abalone, and fish from live tanks, plus a long list of budget rice and noodle dishes.

Rainbow Seafood

Sok Kwu Wan, Lamma ☎2982 8100. Fresh seafood which you pick directly from the tank; along with lightly steamed whole fish, they do masterful deep-fried squid with chillies and salt. Slightly overpriced for what you get, but not expensive.

Tian Ran

Cheung Chau waterfront. Rickety outdoor tables overlooking harbour, where you can wolf down all sorts of desserts – glutinous rice balls, grass jelly, mango and sago drinks – and also staple light meals such as prawn wonton soup. Very inexpensive.

Macau

Sixty kilometres west from Hong Kong across the Pearl River delta, the former Portuguese enclave of Macau occupies a 26 square-kilometre peninsula and a couple of tiny islands jutting off the Chinese mainland. As in Hong Kong, Macau's atmosphere has been shaped by the blending of European and Chinese culture, especially noticeable in the antique colonial architecture and unique Macanese food that exists alongside a Cantonese-speaking population. Although laid-back compared with Hong Kong, Macau attracts millions of big-spending tourists each year, who gamble at its many casinos – it's the only place in China where they have been legalised.

Macau's downtown area is easy to negotiate on foot, though the few hills can make for tiring climbing in the heat of the day. It's here you'll find a packed quarter of old forts, churches, shops and homes lining narrow streets, alongside a more modern casino strip built on reclaimed land. There are also a couple of lively temples, several museums illuminating Macau's long association with fishing and trade, and a series of beautiful gardens and squares. South from the peninsula across three long, ribbon-like bridges, Taipa and Coloane are conjoined islands with a few minor sights, including a black-sand beach.

Largo do Senado

Largo do Senado (Senate Square) is Macau's public focus, cobbled and surrounded by elegant colonial buildings painted pale pink, yellow or white, with shuttered upper storeys and street-level colonnades. There's a small fountain in the middle, while west down Rua de São Domingos and adjacent streets is a food and clothing market. On the east side of the square, **Santa Casa de Misericórdia** (Mon–Sat 10am–5.30pm; MOP$5) is Macau's oldest social institution, founded in 1569 by Dom Belchior Carneiro, the city's first Catholic bishop. His skull is displayed in a wood-panelled museum upstairs, along

Money in Macau

Macau's currency is the pataca (MOP$), divided into avos. Coins come in 10, 20 and 50 avo denominations, notes in 10, 50, 100, and MOP$1000. The Hong Kong dollar and pataca are almost equal in value; you can use Hong Kong dollars in Macau but not pataca in Hong Kong.

Visiting Macau from Hong Kong

By sea

Ferries to Macau's Porto Exterior (Outer Harbour) Jetfoil Terminal leave from the Macau Ferry Terminal, Shun Tak Centre, Central, Hong Kong Island (daily 24hr; 1–4 per hour; www.turbojet.com.hk), and the China Ferry Terminal, Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon (daily 7am–midnight; 2 per hour; www.nwff.com.hk). Both services take 55 minutes and cost about HK$140 one-way (HK$280 return), though discounts are often available. It's advisable to book in advance (through the website or at the terminals) at weekends and on public holidays; buying a return ticket saves time at the other end.

Aim to be at the ferry terminal at least thirty minutes before departure to clear customs. You'll be allowed on with a suitcase or rucksack, but anything more and you'll have to check it in, and pay an extra $20–40.

By air

A helicopter service to Macau's Jetfoil Terminal operates from the Macau Ferry Terminal on Hong Kong Island (daily 9am–10.30pm; 2 per hour; Hong Kong ☎2108 4838, Macau ☎727288, www.helihongkong.com). The journey takes twenty minutes and costs HK$1210 one-way, HK$2420 for a return; (HK$1310/2620 at weekends). In Hong Kong, buy tickets from the window adjacent to the ferry ticket office in the Shun Tak Centre; in Macau, tickets are sold from marked booths on the second floor of the Jetfoil Terminal.

with porcelain marked with the Jesuit logo "JHS".

The Senate House itself, the **Leal Senado** (Mon–Sun 9am–9pm; free), faces Largo do Senado on Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro. It's of traditional Portuguese design, with interior courtyard walls decorated with classic blue-and-white *azulejo* tiling, and an ornamental courtyard out the back. The upstairs library (Mon–Fri 1–7pm) is stacked with a large collection of books about China (many in English), dating from the sixteenth century onwards. On the next level up, the Senate Chamber – a grand room with panelled walls and ceiling and excellent views over the square – is open to the public when not being used for official functions.

▼ LARGO DO SENADO

ACCOMMODATION				EATING & DRINKING			
Central	C	Pensão Ka Va	H	A Lorcha	7	O'Barril 2	3
Hyatt Regency	Q	Pousada de Coloane	S	Alfonso III	5	O Porto Interior	6
Kingsway	N	Pousada de São Tiago	O	Café Nga Tim/ Chan Chi Mei	12	Ou Mun	3
Ko Wah	E	Royal	B	Fat Siu Lau	2	Paparoca	11
Lisboa	M	Sun Sun	G	Galo	10	Platão	3
Man Va	D	Tin Tin Villa	K	Henri's Galley	9	Praia Grande	8
Mandarin Oriental	I	Vila Nam Loon	J	Lord Stowe's Bakery	13	Safari	4
Metropole	L	Vila Universal	F	Macau Vegetarian Farm	1		
Mondial	A	Westin Resort	R				
New Century	P						

East off Largo do Senado, two small lanes slope a short way uphill to another, smaller cobbled square and the squat and undistinguished **Sé**, Macau's cathedral, last rebuilt in 1937 and featuring some fine stained glass. At the north

▲ SÃO PAULO

end of Largo do Senado, the arcaded buildings peter out in the adjacent Largo São Domingos, which holds Macau's most beautiful church, the seventeenth-century Baroque **São Domingos** (open afternoons; enquire at the metal side gate). Its cream-and-stucco facade is echoed inside by the pastel-coloured pillars and walls, and by a quiet statue of the Virgin and Child. On May 13 every year the church is the starting point for a major procession in honour of Our Lady of Fatima.

São Paulo

North of São Domingos, through a nest of cobbled lanes flanked by *pastelarias* (shops selling sweets, biscuits and roast meats), stands the imposing facade of São Paulo church. Founded in 1602, its rich design reflected the cosmopolitan nature of early Macau – designed by an Italian in a Spanish style, and built by Japanese craftsmen. São Paulo became a noted centre of learning until the expulsion of the Jesuits from Macau, after which it became an army barracks. In 1835 a fire, which had started in the kitchens, destroyed the entire complex except for the carved stone front.

On approaching up the wide swathe of steps it seems at first that the church still stands, but on reaching the terrace the facade alone is revealed, like a theatre backdrop, rising in four chipped and cracked tiers. The symbolic statues and reliefs include a dove at the top (the Holy Spirit) flanked by the sun and moon; below is Jesus, around whom reliefs show the implements of the Crucifixion – a ladder, manacles, a crown of thorns and a flail. Below are the Virgin Mary and angels, flowers

Land reclamation

Land reclamation has seen the Macau peninsula grow two-and-a-half times bigger over the last 150 years. The impetus for this, and the ensuing drive for modernization, is Macau's determination not to be left out of the economic boom sweeping the adjacent Chinese mainland. The biggest development projects so far include Macau's international airport, the expansion of the Porto Exterior area to include a cultural centre and theme park, a new Legislative Assembly building, and the southern peninsula's waterfront being closed up to form two artificial lakes, fringed by a network of expressways and bridges to Taipa. One positive aspect of this modern development on reclaimed land is that the older parts of town haven't been targeted for wholesale demolition and reconstruction – something all too common on the Chinese mainland.

▲ FORTALEZA DO MONTE

representing China (a peony) and Japan (chrysanthemum), a griffin and a rigged galleon, while the bottom tier holds four Jesuit saints, and the crowning words "Mater Dei" above the central door.

Fortaleza do Monte

East of São Paulo the solid Fortaleza do Monte, a fortress that was part of the São Paulo complex, saw action only once, when its cannons helped repel the Dutch in 1622. The ramparts are still lined with these weathered iron cannons, with views over almost the whole peninsula.

The fort houses the **Museu de Macau** (Tues–Sun 10am–6pm; MOP$15), which explores Macau's history. The first floor charts the arrival of the Portuguese and the heyday of the trading routes, with displays of bartered goods – wooden casks, porcelain, spices, silver and silk. The second floor has a more Chinese theme, with religious artefacts, full-sized street and house reconstructions, as well as videos of customs and festivals – even a Chinese wedding where the scarlet-clad bride watches the ritual burning of all her possessions on her wedding morning. Offbeat items include a display on cricket-fighting (where two of these aggressive insects are pitted against each other), complete with a tiny coffin and grave headstone for expired fighters.

Hong Kung Temple

Rua Cinco de Outubro. There's a fascinating maze of lanes leading west from São Paulo to the seafront, some of which have changed little over the last fifty years. The unpretentious Hong Kung Temple is dedicated to Kwan Tai, god of riches and war, and is the focus for the extraordinary Drunken Dragon Festival, held on the eighth day of the fourth lunar month (April or May). Organized by the Fish Retailers' Association, the festival features opera, religious ceremonies, martial arts performances, and a parade from here to the Porto Interior (Inner Harbour) via all the local fish shops, by men carrying large wooden dragon heads and consuming vast quantities of spirits.

Jardim Luís de Camões

Daily 6am–10pm. Just off Praça Luís de Camões square, the Jardim Luís de Camões (Camões Garden) is a very tropical, laid-back spread of banyans, ferns, fan palms, paved terraces and flowers. It's always full of people pottering about, exercising or playing cards under the trees, and commemorates the sixteenth-century Portuguese poet who is supposed to have visited Macau and written part of his epic *Os Lusíadas* (about Vasco da Gama's voyages) here. There's a bust of Camões, encircled by granite boulders, although there's no real evidence that he did ever come here.

Cemitério Protestante

Rua de Entre Campos. Daily 8.30am–5.30pm. The Cemitério Protestante (Old Protestant Cemetery) houses many of the non-Portuguese traders and visitors who expired in the enclave. For decades, Protestants had no set burial place in Macau: the Catholic Portuguese didn't want them and the Chinese objected if they were interred on ancestral lands. Some of the graves were moved here from various resting places outside the city walls, as the pre-1814 headstones show, and now sit slightly forlornly and somewhat overgrown in this sprawling plot.

The most famous resident is the artist George Chinnery, who spent his life painting the local coast. Some of the cemetery's most poignant graves are those belonging to ordinary seamen: Samuel Smith "died by a fall from aloft"; a cabin boy similarly met his end "through the effects of a fall into the hold"; while Oliver Mitchell "died of dysentery". The grave of the missionary Robert Morrison, who translated the Bible into Chinese, is also here, as is that of his wife, who died in childbirth.

Jardim Lou Lim Ieoc

Avenida do Conselheiro Ferreira de Almeida. Daily dawn–dusk. A high wall encloses the beautiful Jardim Lou Lim Ieoc, a formal arrangement of pavilions, carp ponds, bamboo groves and frangipani trees. Built in the nineteenth century by the wealthy Chinese merchant Lou Kou, it was modelled on

▼ JARDIM LOU LIM IEOC

the famous classical Chinese gardens of Suzhou, and typically manages to appear much more spacious than it really is – it's the only such example in either Hong Kong or Macau. There are occasional amateur opera performances on Sundays.

Guia Hill

Avenida Sidónio Pais. Guia Hill, Macau's apex and site of its former defence headquarters, is now a landscaped park. Paths wind to the top from the entrances on Estrada da Vittoria and Avenida Sidonió Pais; from the latter, there's also a cable-car link to the top (Tues–Sun 8am–6pm; MOP$2 one-way, MOP$3 return). Either way, you'll end up a short walk from the remains of **Fortaleza da Guia**, a fortress completed in 1638, and originally designed to defend the border with China – though given its perch above the whole peninsula it's seen most service as an observation post. There is a network of short, disconnected tunnels used in the 1930s to store munitions, and a small seventeenth-century chapel within the walls dedicated to Our Lady of Guia. This contains an image of the Virgin – who local legend says left the chapel and deflected enemy bullets with her robe during the Dutch attack of 1622 – and recently uncovered original blue-and-pink frescoes, which combine Chinese elements with Christian religious images. The chapel's other function was to ring its bell to warn of storms, something now taken care of by the fortress's lighthouse, built in 1865. The best views from the fortress walls are southeast down over the modern Porto Exterior, and westwards towards Fortaleza do Monte and the old town.

▲ RUA DA FELICIDADE

Kun Iam Temple

Avenida do Coronel Mesquita. Daily 7am–6pm; free. Entered through a banyan-planted courtyard crowded with fortune-tellers, the 400-year-old Kun Iam Temple is dedicated to the Bodhisattva of mercy (known in Hong Kong as Kwun Yum), and was the venue for the signing of the first-ever Sino-American treaty in 1844. The buildings are of the usual heavy stone, but their roofs are decked in colourful porcelain statuettes depicting folktales and historical scenes. Inside the third hall are statues of Kun Iam and eighteen other Bodhisattvas, those who had attained the right to enter paradise but chose to stay on earth to help humanity.

Rua da Felicidade

On the west side of the southern peninsula is the **Porto Interior** or Inner Harbour, formerly Macau's main port area. Inland from here is a warren of backstreets, the most interesting of which is **Rua da Felicidade** (Happiness Street). This

was once a sordid red-light district but now – even though the prostitutes linger – it comprises an atmospheric run of guesthouses, *pastelarias* selling biscuits and cured pork, and restaurants. Although the tidy shopfronts have all been whitewashed, and their shutters and big wooden doors carefully restored and painted red, the area was still considered suitably rough to double as Shanghai for the filming of *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*.

The Barra

The Barra is the district at the southern end of Macau's peninsula, cut by Rua Central and its continuations, a dense collection of nineteenth-century civic buildings and cheap Chinese cafés, clothes-making workshops and small businesses. On Rua Central, the peppermint-coloured **Teatro Dom Pedro V** now functions as the members-only Clube Macao; opposite is the church of **Santo Agostinho**, whose pastel walls are decorated with delicate piped icing. Further south, the square-towered **São Lourenço** church sports a mildewed exterior framed by palms and fig trees. Up above on Penha Hill, a stiff walk is rewarded by the nineteenth-century **Bishop's Palace and Penha Chapel** (daily 9am–5.30pm; free); it's peaceful inside, though the exteriors are drab – grand views south of the bridges snaking over to Taipa compensate.

▼ A-MA TEMPLE

The A-Ma Temple

Rua do Almirante Sérgio. The A-Ma Temple is Macau's oldest place of worship, founded in 1370 and named after a girl whose spirit would appear to save people at sea (known in Hong Kong as Tin Hau). When the Portuguese made their first landfall here in the early 1550s, they unintentionally named the whole territory after her ("Macau" being a corruption of A-Ma Kok, the name of the bay).

The complex comprises a series of small stone halls and pavilions jumbled together on the hillside amongst granite boulders, all cluttered with incense spirals and red-draped wooden models of boats and statues of the goddess. Many of these rocks are also carved with symbols of the A-Ma story and poems in flowery Chinese, describing Macau and its religious associations. There is an array of fish tanks full of turtles, onto whose shells people try to drop coins for good luck. The busiest time to visit is for the **A-Ma Festival** (the 23rd day of the third moon; April or May; see p.165).

Museu Marítimo

Rua do Almirante Sérgio. Mon & Wed–Sun 10am–5.30pm; MOP$10.

▲ GOLDEN DRAGON CASINO, MACAU

Macau's Museu Marítimo (Maritime Museum) is an engaging and well-presented collection relating to local fishing techniques and festivals, Chinese and Portuguese maritime prowess, and boat building. There's navigational equipment, a scale model of seventeenth-century Macau, traditional clothing used by the fishermen, a host of lovingly made models of both Chinese and Portuguese vessels, and even a small collection of boats moored at the pier. These include a wooden *lorcha* – used for chasing pirate ships – and racing craft used during the Dragon Boat Festival (see p.166). The whole collection is made eminently accessible with the help of explanatory English-language notes and video displays.

Fortaleza da Barra

Rua São Tiago da Barra. Set at Macau's southernmost tip, the ruins of what was once Macau's most important fortress, the Fortaleza da Barra, are now part of the *Pousada de São Tiago* hotel. The fortress, completed in 1629, was designed with ten-metre-high walls and lined with cannons to protect the entrance to the Inner Harbour. Only the entranceway, foundations and eighteenth-century chapel survive from its original form, but they are easy to see inside the hotel.

Avenida da Amizade and the Porto Exterior

The modern area southeast of Guia Hill is built on land reclaimed from the Porto Exterior (Outer Harbour) over the last few decades. The main artery here is the multi-laned Avenida da Amizade,

Casinos

Macau's seventeen **casinos** are frenetic and packed places, generally with little padding to their primary function as gambling halls – don't expect Las Vegas-style glitter.

Games on offer include one-armed bandits or slot machines (called "hungry tigers" locally), card games like baccarat and blackjack, and some peculiarly Chinese options: *boule* is like roulette but with a larger ball and fewer numbers; *pai kao* is Chinese dominoes; *fan tan* involves a cup being scooped through a pile of buttons which are then counted out in groups of four, bets being laid on how many are left at the end of the count; and *dai-siu* ("big-small") bets on the value of three dice either having a small (3–9) or big (10–18) value.

Entry is conditional on your being over 18 years old, not wearing shorts, sandals or slippers, handing over bags and cameras at the door, and carrying a valid passport. Minimum bets are usually MOP$100.

whose southern end is marked by the orange-tiled **Lisboa**, Macau's most famous hotel and a roaring, 1930s-style casino, crowned by a multistorey circular drum done up like a wedding cake. Nearby on Avenida da Praia Grande, the **São Francisco barracks**, built in 1864 and painted a deep pink (as are all of Macau's military buildings), are the area's sole antique.

Moving up Avenida da Amizade, the road is lined with hotels and casinos, of which the most eye-catching is the gold-plated **Sands**, whose vast lozenge-shaped interior is all Las Vegas slickness, with a live band and a high tier of balcony bars and restaurants. Behind it on Avenida Xian Xing Hai, the **Macau Cultural Centre** houses the five-storeyed **Museum of Art** (Tues–Sun 10am–7pm; ☎555 555; MOP$5), whose collection of period paintings of Macau shares space with travelling exhibitions and temporary exhibitions from overseas. The adjacent waterfront is dominated by a twenty-metre bronze sculpture of Kun Iam.

Across Avenida da Amizade from the Sands casino, holidaying mainlanders pose in front of a **Golden Lotus Flower sculpture**, which sits beside the Tourist Activity Centre. The Centre's best feature is the **Museu do Vinho** (Wine Museum; daily 10am–6pm; MOP$15), dedicated to the history of Portuguese viniculture; entry gets you a free sample, and the shop sells some interesting vintages. Back near the water, the **Floating Casino** is all Chinatown red and gold, but feels dull, while the **Jai-Alai** casino is a downmarket, dingy affair that may live up to your expectations of the seedier side of Macau's gaming industry. Beyond here, the road and a pedestrian overpass lead to Macau's **Jetfoil Terminal**, the town's main transport hub.

Taipa Village

Taipa's main point of interest is old Taipa Village, a few narrow streets surrounding a couple of faded old squares. The Portuguese and Macanese **restaurants** here are one attraction, and on Sundays (noon–9pm) the streets are packed by a handicraft market. **Rua do Cunha** is the main street, a narrow pedestrianized lane lined with restaurants, *pastelarias*, and shops selling daily necessities. This exits into little **Feira da Carmo** square, surrounded by old pastel-coloured homes, at whose centre is the colonnaded nineteenth-century marketplace. Two nearby

Visiting Taipa and Coloane

For Taipa Village, take bus #11 from Avenida Almeida Ribeiro near Largo do Senado, bus #28A from the Jetfoil Terminal, or buses #22 or #33 from the *Hotel Lisboa*; all these drop off near Taipa Stadium, a short walk from the village.

For Coloane, catch bus #21 or #21A from the *Hotel Lisboa*; cutting straight across Taipa, these both travel down Coloane's west side to Coloane Village, from where the #21A and #26 continue via Cheoc Van Beach to Hác Sá Beach. From Taipa Village, take bus #15, which runs around Coloane's east side via the *Westin Resort* and Hác Sá Beach, before terminating at Coloane Village.

▲ HÁC SÁ BEACH

temples to Tin Hau and Pak Tai are similarly low key, though Pak Tai's sports an impressive stone frieze above the entrance.

Exit Feira da Carmo square onto Rua Correia da Silva, and you'll soon see a flowing set of stairs lined with fig trees, which ascend to the small **Igreja do Carmo** ("Lady of Carmel Church"; Mon & Wed–Sun 8am–5pm). Just below sit five early-twentieth-century mansions set up as **Casa Museu** (House Museum; Tues–Sun 10am–6pm; MOP$5, free Sunday). The first is comfortably airy and filled with tasteful period wooden furniture; others display old photos of Taipa and Coloane, costumed mannequins and temporary art shows.

Coloane

Coloane island was once a base for pirates who hid out in its cliffs and caves, seizing the cargoes of trading ships passing between Macau and China. The island's main draws are peaceful surroundings, some beaches and a village with the usual mix of temples and colonial leftovers.

Parque de Seac Pai Van (Tues–Sun 9am–5.45pm; free), is a landscaped hillside with gardens, ponds, pavilions, and paths up to where a twenty-metre-high white-marble statue of A-Ma looks out over the water. **Coloane Village**, a cluster of cobbled lanes around a little central square and a seafront row of crumbling Chinese houses, shrines and temples, is also home to the pale yellow **St Francis Xavier chapel** (dawn to dusk), named after the sixteenth-century missionary who passed through Macau on his way to China and Japan. Out front is a monument with embedded cannons commemorating the repelling of the last pirate attack in 1910. Further along the waterfront, the **Tam Kung Temple** houses a whalebone shaped into a Dragon Boat with oarsmen.

Coloane's southern coast has some good **beaches**,

▲ FAT SIU LAU

though the water is unfit for swimming. **Cheoc Van** is well developed, featuring cafés and a swimming pool (Mon–Sat 8am–9pm, Sun 8am–midnight; MOP$10). **Hác Sá** is better, a long stretch of grey-black sand backed by pine trees, with plenty of picnic places, a beach bar and a recreation complex with another pool (Mon–Sat 8am–9pm, Sun 8am–midnight; MOP$15).

Restaurants

A Lorcha

Rua do Almirante Sergio 289 ☎313193. Wed–Sun 12.30–3.30pm & 7–11.30pm. This wood-beamed restaurant serves outstanding Portuguese food, and is consequently always busy – it's best to reserve in advance for lunch, when the Portuguese business community is out in force. There's a large menu of staples, including *serradura*, a spectacular cream and biscuit dessert. Expect to pay MOP$100 a head, including wine.

Alfonso III

Rua Central 11A ☎586272. Mon–Sat noon–3pm & 6.30–10.30pm. Split-level café-restaurant specializing in Portuguese food. Provincial dishes feature, such as a mammoth, oily serving of Álentejo pork with clams, drenched in fresh coriander – tasty and good value. Expect to pay MOP$40–60 per dish.

Café Nga Tim/Chan Chi Mei

Largo Eduardo Marques, in front of the Xavier Chapel, Coloane Village. Daily noon–1am. Inexpensive menu of Chinese, Macanese and Portuguese dishes, including excellent, fresh seafood.

Fat Siu Lau

Rua da Felicidade 64 ☎573585. Daily 11am–midnight. One of Macau's oldest and most famous Chinese restaurants, with pigeon the speciality, best eaten with their excellent French fries. Mains cost MOP$60 and upwards.

Galo

Rua do Cunha 45, Taipa Village ⓣ827423. Mon–Fri 10.30am–3.30pm & 5.30–10.30pm, Sat & Sun 10.30am–10.30pm. Decorated in Portuguese country style, with a photographic menu sporting boiled meats, steaks, great grilled squid or crab, and large mixed salads. Not great cuisine, but hearty and full of flavour. Around MOP$60 per serving.

Henri's Galley

Avenida da República 4 ⓣ556251. Daily 11am–11pm. Unexciting decor, compensated by pavement tables with waterfront views. Spicy prawns, roast pigeon, quail, curried crab, and African chicken are all terrific. Mains cost MOP$40–60.

Lord Stowe's Bakery

Coloane Village Square, Coloane. Daily 7am–5pm. Although British-owned, this is one of the best places to eat *natas* (small custard tarts). The recipe is originally Portuguese, but this bakery claims to use a secret, improved version without animal fat. Buy takeaways from the bakery itself, or sit down for coffee and a light meal at their café around the corner.

Macau Vegetarian Farm

Avenida do Coronel. Mesquita 11 ⓣ752824. Daily 11am–9pm. A huge place opposite the Kun Iam Temple, serving Chinese food, which – despite appearances – is strictly vegetarian, with tofu, gluten and mushrooms prepared cunningly to resemble meat. The menu is illustrated with photographs, making ordering easy. Mains MOP$30–50, set meals from MOP$60 a head.

O'Barril 2

Travessa de São. Domingos 12 (the alleyway running between the Sé and Largo do Senado). Mon–Fri noon–11pm, Sat & Sun 10am–11pm. Solid, satisfying well-cooked snacks, sandwiches and soups. Portions are large and prices cheap.

O Porto Interior

Rua do Almirante Sérgio 259 ⓣ967770. Tues–Sun noon–3pm & 7–11.30pm. A smart, relaxed place excelling in mid-range Portuguese and Macanese fare, served amid a mix of Chinese wooden screens and terracotta tiling.

Ou Mun Café

Travessa de São Domingos 12, Tues–Sun 8am–8pm. It's debatable whether either this, or the adjacent *O'Barril 2*, is the best place in town for excellent, inexpensive coffee and cake.

▼ *PASTELARIA*, MACAU

Paparoca

Rua Correia da Silva 57–59, Taipa Village ⓣ827636. Daily noon–9pm. Blue-tiled walls, and an inexpensive menu which takes in shrimp balls, clam chowder, shrimp piri-piri, and Macanese chicken.

Platão

Travessa de São Domingos 3 ⓣ331818. Tues–Sun noon–11pm. This lively, pricey restaurant boasts a great sit-out courtyard in front, perfect for a beer. The menu is colonial Portuguese and includes cod soufflé, baked duck rice, and – with advance warning – suckling pig. At least MOP$60 for mains.

Praia Grande

Praça Lobo d'Avila, Avenida da Praia Grande ⓣ973022. Daily noon–11pm. One of Macau's best Portuguese restaurants, whose upstairs rooms have a good harbour view. The food features pan-fried clams with pork, baked onion soup, and grilled codfish. MOP$55 and up.

Safari

Patio do Cotovelo 14 ⓣ574313. Daily 11am–11pm. A pleasant, unpretentious Macanese restaurant with a 1970s feel. Serves inexpensive Portuguese staples and a few French dishes, such as baked snails and onion soup. Their set meal, of soup, a main, plus dessert or coffee for MOP$50, is good value.

Accommodation

Hostels, guesthouses and hotels

Accommodation in Hong Kong doesn't have to be a major expense, though space comes at a premium. The cheapest option is a dorm bed (around HK$80) at either one of the seven IYHF **hostels** (Ⓦwww.yha.org.hk), though these are all in remote locations and must be booked in advance. There are also many privately run hostels in Causeway Bay and Tsim Sha Tsui; those in the latter, while good in themselves, are often housed in vast, seedy concrete blocks. A **guesthouse** room will have a bit more space and air conditioning, perhaps with a minute bathroom (HK$250). **Hotel** rooms start at HK$400 and go up to thousands per night. All guesthouses and hotels offer discounts for long-term stays.

Macau's rates are similar to Hong Kong's but better value, with more space and better service at the low- and mid-range end of the market. All prices given are for the cheapest double room unless specified; hostel prices are for a dorm bed per person.

Central

The following are marked on the map on pp.52–53 unless noted.

Conrad Pacific Place, 88 Queensway ⓣ2521 3838, Ⓦwww.conrad.com.hk. Spiffy modern hotel with characterless but large and well-equipped rooms. The hotel takes full advantage of its position on the upper floors of Pacific Place towers – there are views from all rooms. $2950

Garden View International House (YWCA) 1 Macdonnell Rd ⓣ2877 3737, Ⓦwww.ywca.org.hk. Expensive at full rate, but excellently located near the Botanical Gardens and Lower Peak Tram Terminal. Often has discounted rates, and a package for seven consecutive nights is available. Book in advance. $1250

Island Shangri-La Pacific Place, Supreme Court Rd ⓣ2877 3838, Ⓦwww.shangri-la.com. Excellent Peak and harbour views, particularly from the top-floor *Cyrano's* bar. Rooms are set around a central atrium holding a Chinese landscape painting spanning more than forty floors. $2500

Ma Wui Hall Youth Hostel Mount Davis, Hong Kong Island ⓣ2817 5715. Bus #5 west along Des Voeux Rd, Central (stop near Statute Square). Get off 45min later on Victoria Rd, at junction of the Mount

Booking a room

Hong Kong and Macau don't really have room seasons. In Hong Kong, the only time when there will be fewer options than usual is during Chinese New Year (January or February), or during popular sports events such as the Rugby Sevens. In Macau, rates rise Friday and Saturday nights and during the Easter Grand Prix, when rooms can be in short supply. Booking in advance can often secure good deals at any time, available either by simply phoning up, or through the hotel website if there is one.

Dedicated websites for Hong Kong include Ⓦwww.hotels-in-hong-kong.com, which features discounts, packages and various offers for mostly mid- to upmarket hotels; and the Hong Kong Hotels Association (Ⓦwww.hkha.org), though they only deal with hotels that are members of their association. For Macau, either book through a travel agent in Hong Kong, or phone in advance and bargain.

Davis Path – hostel is 30-min walk up path. Hong Kong's most accessible youth hostel, with superb views, cooking facilities (it's entirely self-catering) and 163 beds, including some two- to six-person rooms. Getting here, however, is time consuming. A taxi from Central will cost $100–150. Dorms $80, rooms $150

Mandarin Oriental 5 Connaught Rd ⓣ2522 0111, ⓦwww.mandarinoriental.com. Considered by many to be Hong Kong's best hotel, with faultless service, excellent facilities and decor (antique-filled rooms with balconies, and corridors featuring eighteenth-century Chinese textiles), and an ideal location. $2000

Ritz-Carlton 3 Connaught Rd ⓣ2877 6666, ⓦwww.ritzcarlton.com. In a prime city-centre location, it's probably the best alternative in Central to the *Mandarin Oriental*. Rooms are eminently comfortable, and there's a high staff-to-guest ratio. $2000

Wan Chai

The following are marked on the map on p.76–77.

Beverley Floor 4, 175–191 Lockhart Rd ⓣ2507 2026, ⓕ2877 9277. Rooms are reasonably spacious and clean, if also lurid and tacky. The management is amenable to bargaining, so altogether a good deal. $500

Luk Kwok 72 Gloucester Rd ⓣ2866 2166, ⓦwww.lukkwokhotel.com. Famous as the setting for *The World of Suzie Wong*, though the rebuilt brown-marble and glass exterior and staid, mid-range rooms have none of the romance of the novel. $1650

Renaissance Harbour View 1 Harbour Rd ⓣ2802 8888, ⓦwww.renaissancehotels.com/hkghv. Splendid views and expense-account business clientele. You get to use the adjacent *Grand Hyatt*'s facilities, including the largest hotel swimming pool in Hong Kong. $2500

Wesley 22 Hennessy Rd ⓣ2866 6688, ⓕ2866 6633. A quiet and comfortable modern hotel, though the gloomy rooms are done out in grey and views are restricted to the sides of high-rises with glimmers of the harbour if you crane your neck. All are equipped with standard hotel amenities including mini-bar and satellite TV. $800

Causeway Bay and Happy Valley

The following are marked on the map on p.76–77.

Alisan Flat A, 5th Floor, Hoito Court, 275 Gloucester Rd ⓣ2838 0762, ⓦhttp://home.hkstar.com/~alisangh. Tidy guesthouse with helpful management; rooms are the usual cramped boxes, but all have a/c, TV, shower and phone. $320

Clean Guesthouse 1st Floor, Room N, Central Building, 531 Jaffe Rd ⓣ2833 2063. Living up to its name, this very tidy and friendly place is one of the best in this building; towels, slippers and soap are all provided. $280

Emperor 1 Wang Tak St, Happy Valley ⓣ2893 3693, ⓦwww.holidaycity.com/emperor-hong-kong. A decent hotel in a peaceful location, away from Causeway Bay's crowds. The medium-sized rooms are cheery and comfortable, with all the standard hotel facilities. $1780

Jetvan Traveller's House 4th Floor, 4a Fairview Mansions, 51 Paterson St ⓣ2890 8133, ⓔjetvanhus@yahoo.com. This popular guesthouse has eight rooms, all with telephone, a/c, TV and bathroom, though some are cramped and windowless. Book ahead. $350

King's 300 Jaffe Rd ⓣ3188 2277, ⓕ3188 2626. Quirky boutique hotel with a "cyber" theme resulting in a sort of minimalist sci-fi decor. Rooms come with online computers and plasma-screen TVs, and deals can slash rates. $1000

Park Lane 310 Gloucester Rd ⓣ2293 8888, ⓦwww.parklane.com.hk. Smart option for business or upmarket travellers, overlooking Victoria Park; well placed for MTR. $2300

Wang Fat 3rd Floor, Paterson Building, 47 Paterson St ⓣ2895 1015, ⓦwww.wangfathostel.com.hk. A recently renovated, bright and clean hostel with slightly more elbow room than most, plus a free laundry service and multi-lingual manager. Dorm beds $120, double rooms $350

Tsim Sha Tsui

The following are marked on the map on p.93.

Dragon Inn **Block B, 3rd Floor, Chungking Mansions, 36–44 Nathan Rd ⓣ2368 2007, ⓔdragoinn@asiaonline.net.** Well-organized, friendly hostel-cum-travel agent, with 21 clean and basic rooms including singles with shared bathroom and en-suite triples. Security cameras and ever-present staff make this place feel safe – a good choice. $170

Garden Hostel **3rd Floor, F4, Mirador Mansions, 56–58 Nathan Rd ⓣ2311 1183.** Laid-back hostel with fifty beds and a pot-planted garden, where you can chill out with some secondhand books. Their eight-person dorms are either male- or female-only; the individual rooms are white-tiled to the ceiling and clinically spartan and clean. Dorm beds $60, double rooms $160

Inter-Continental **18 Salisbury Rd ⓣ2721 1211, ⓦwww.hongkong-ic.intercontinental.com.** Rival in quality (if not style) to the *Peninsula* and actually the preferred hotel of many international business tycoons. $3300

Marco Polo Hongkong, Marco Polo Gateway, Marco Polo Prince **Harbour City, Canton Rd ⓣ2113 1888, ⓦwww.marcopolohotels.com.** The Harbour City complex houses three different hotels under the same Marco Polo umbrella. They're all fairly fancy, if not overwhelming, and you can use each hotel's facilities at will. Only the *Hongkong* (the largest) has harbour views; those at the *Prince* overlook the park. $2050

Miramar **118–130 Nathan Rd ⓣ2368 1111, ⓦwww.miramarhk.com.** Right opposite Kowloon Park, this fairly garish hotel is great value for money if you're after a mid-range place, and bursting with shops and restaurants. It's enormous (the rooms are much larger than average), and often full. $1200

Peninsula **Salisbury Rd ⓣ2920 2888, ⓦwww.peninsula.com.** Possibly the grandest hotel in Hong Kong, the *Peninsula* has been putting visitors up in unrivalled style since the late 1920s. Its elegant colonial wings have been overshadowed by the new central tower, which provides harbour views to match the style and quality of the hotel. $2600

Rooms for Tourist **6th Floor, Lyton House Building, 36 Mody Rd ⓣ2366 0579 or 2721 8309.** A friendly and stylish guesthouse with a deadpan manager, and fresh orchids in the bathroom. The en-suite rooms are well sized, clean and simple. $250

Salisbury YMCA **41 Salisbury Rd ⓣ2268 7000, ⓦwww.ymcahk.org.hk.** This is the best semi-cheap hotel location in town. The facilities include indoor pools, fitness centre and a squash court. The air-conditioned doubles with TV and shower are booked up weeks in advance, but there are also 56 budget beds available in four-bedded dorms. Dorm beds $210, double rooms $700

Star Guesthouse **Flat B, 6th Floor, 21 Cameron Rd ⓣ2723 8951, ⓦwww.starguesthouse.com.hk.** Friendly owner Charlie Chan offers a comfortable range of singles, doubles and triples in two locations along the road; some rooms are tiny, however, so ask to see a few. $300

Tai Wan Hotel **Block A, 3rd Floor, Chungking Mansions, 36–44 Nathan Rd ⓣ9406 2379, ⓔtaiwan.hotel@hotmail.com.** New and very clean; bigger rooms than most and a reception area staffed full-time make this place a cut above average. $170

Welcome Guesthouse **Block A, 7th Floor, A5 Chungking Mansions, 36–44 Nathan Rd ⓣ2721 7793, ⓔGuestHouseHK@hotmail.com.** A recommended first choice; clean rooms with a/c, with and without shower, and some singles. Luggage storage, laundry service, and occasional *tai chi* lessons in Kowloon Park in the morning. $160

Yau Ma Tei

The following are marked on the map on p.105.

Booth Lodge **7th Floor, 11 Wing Sing Lane ⓣ2771 9266, ⓦwww.boothlodge.salvation.org.hk.** A smart, Salvation Army hotel just off Nathan Rd, close to the

Jade and Temple Street night markets. Rooms are comfortable and functional (though some are small), and there's a restaurant and outdoor café terrace. $700

Caritas Bianchi Lodge **4 Cliff Rd ☎2388 1111, ℗2770 6669.** Almost next door to *Booth Lodge,* and around twice as big, the a/c rooms in this Roman Catholic-run hotel have bath and TV. $820

International House (YMCA) **23 Waterloo Rd ☎2771 9111, ⓦ www.ymcaintlhousehk.org.** Well-equipped YMCA guesthouse with some budget single rooms for men; you can't book in advance, so just turn up early. Rooms come with a/c, bath and TV, and there's also laundry service. $680

Majestic **348 Nathan Rd ☎2781 1333, ⓦ www.majestichotel.com.hk.** One of the better hotels in this area, above a shopping complex and two-screen cinema. The rooms are comfortable, if a little heavy on the pine furniture. $950

Nathan **378 Nathan Rd ☎2780 9798, ⓦ www.nathanhotel.com.** Good-value, newly renovated business venue, with fairly spacious rooms featuring broadband Internet connections. $880.

Mong Kok

The following are marked on the map on p.105.

Dragon Hostel **Room 707, 7th Floor, Sincere House, 83 Argyle St ☎2395 0577, ⓦ www.dragonhostel.com.** Guesthouse with helpful management and comparatively large single, double and family rooms that present a good deal when compared with what you'd get for the same price in Tsim Sha Tsui. Long-stay rates available. $250

Royal Plaza **193 Prince Edward Rd West, ☎2928 8822, ⓦ www.royalplaza.com.hk.** This smart hotel sits on top of Mongkok KCR Station, with an entrance in the Grand Century Place shopping plaza. The 469 rooms come with all the usual hotel amenities but are fairly characterless; also has a forty-metre swimming pool, gym, an enormous ballroom and a library. $1580

The New Territories

The following are marked on the map on pp.110–111.

Bradbury Hall Youth Hostel **Chek Keng, Sai Kung Peninsula ☎2328 2458. Bus #94 from Sai Kung town (see p.119) to Pak Tam Au pass, before Wong Shek, then follow signposted path (45min).** Camping facilities plus 92 dorm beds; the hostel is right on the sea and there are basic meals available at small Chek Keng village nearby. Dorms $80

Bradbury Lodge Youth Hostel **66 Tai Mei Tuk Rd, Tai Mei Tuk, Tai Po ☎2662 5123. Bus #75K from Tai Po Market KCR.** Two- to four-bed rooms plus 94 dorm beds, sited at the edge of Plover Cove Country Park (see p.116). Self-catering facilities only; bring supplies with you. Dorms $80, double rooms $150

Pak Sha O Youth Hostel **Hoi Ha Rd (Jones' Cove), Sai Kung Peninsula ☎2328 2327. Bus #94 from Sai Kung town (see p.119) to Ko Tong village; then 30-min walk down Hoi Ha Rd (taxis are sometimes available).** Large self-catering hostel with 112 beds, plus camping facilities; there's a small beach 15min away on foot, and basic meals available in the village. Dorms $80

Saigon Beach Resort **Tai Mong Tsi Rd, Sai Kung town ☎2791 1068, ℗2792 3035.** Perfect location, right by the beach around 1km from Sai Kung town (reached on bus #92 from Diamond Hill MTR, see p.119), with thirty rooms all boasting a sea view. There's an excellent bar and restaurant overlooking the sea and a watersports centre nearby. The building itself is an ugly concrete box, though the rooms have been recently renovated. Rates rise by thirty percent at weekends. $1000

Sze Lok Yuen Youth Hostel **Tai Mo Shan, Tsuen Wan ☎2488 8188. Bus #51 from Tsuen Wan MTR, then 40-min walk** (see p.118). Camping facilities and 92 dorm beds at the start of trails up Tai Mo Shan; self-catering only, so bring all supplies with you. Dorms $80

Lantau

The following are marked on the map on pp.122–123.

Babylon Villa **Cheung Sha Lower Village ☎2980 3145, ℻2980 3024.** A standard British-style bed and breakfast by the sea. There are three cosy rooms in one of three colour themes: pink, blue or yellow, with mini-bar, bathroom and TV. Everything's a bit cramped, but the setting is romantic, there's a small terraced dining room and a pile of secondhand books and magazines. $800

Mui Wo Inn **Mui Wo ☎2984 7725, ℻2984 1916.** A short walk beyond the *Silvermine Beach*, this kitsch little hotel has a small, kidney-shaped swimming pool and fairly plain rooms; the front ones have balconies and sea views over the beach, while the rooms out back are cheaper but not so nice. $280

S.G. Davis Youth Hostel **Ngong Ping ☎2985 5610. From Po Lin Monastery (bus #2 from Mui Wo, #21 from Tai O or #23 from Tung Chung, or cable car from Tung Chung), it's signed around 500m along the Lantau Peak trail (see p.126).** Camping facilities and 46 beds available in this self-catering hostel. Dorms $80

Silvermine Beach Hotel **Mui Wo ☎2984 8295, ⓦ www.resort.com.hk.** Overlooking the beach at Silvermine Bay, this is comfortable and great value for money compared to the hotels back in the centre of Hong Kong Island. There's a swimming pool, gym, sauna, tennis courts and all the usual business paraphernalia. $880

Lamma

The following are marked on the map on p.128.

Bali Holiday Resort **Yung Shue Wan ☎2982 4580.** Newish, spacious rooms in an apartment block, with or without views and kitchenettes – more modern than *Man Lai Wah* but further back from the water. $350–500

Concerto Inn **28 Hung Sing Yeh Beach, Yung Shue Wan ☎2982 1668, ⓦ www.concertoinn.com.hk.** Lamma's best hotel, offering rooms with balconies overlooking the beach, satellite TV and a video and fridge in every room – some have kitchens, too. The restaurant is sited on a nice garden terrace. $480–650

Cheung Chau

The following is marked on the map on p.129.

Warwick **East Bay ☎2981 0081, ⓦ www.warwickhotel.com.hk.** Overlooking Tung Wan Beach, the expensive rooms in this concrete box have balconies, private baths and cable TV – there's also a terrace café and a swimming pool. Babysitting service and long-stay rates available. $700

Eastern Macau

The following are marked on the map on p.135.

Kingsway **Rua de Luís Gonzaga Gomes 230 ☎702888, ⓦ www.hotelkingsway.com.mo.** This upmarket spot bristles with facilities – 24hr coffee shop, plush casino, sauna and health spa, and well-appointed rooms with views of the city or Taipa. MOP$600

Lisboa **Av. de Lisboa 2–4 ☎577666, ⓦ www.hotelisboa.com.** A monstrous orange building with around a thousand rooms, and a bundle of 24hr casinos on several floors, shops, bars and restaurants, outdoor pool and sauna. All rooms have nice bathrooms and decent furnishings; those in the front come with views too. MOP$850, harbour views MOP$1050

Mandarin Oriental **Av. da Amizade ☎567888, ⓦ www.mandarinoriental.com/macau.** Excellent service and facilities at this upmarket resort tailor-made for families (children's club, poolside restaurant), corporate groups (a team-building climbing wall and trapeze) and the more traditional Macau tourist amenities (casino, popular bar). MOP$2000

Metropole **Av. da Praia Grande 493–501 ☎388166, ⓦ www.mctshmi.com.** This well-placed central hotel is just back from the Praia Grande, and good value if you're

looking for rooms with all the trimmings at a lowish cost. MOP$530

Mondial **Rua do Antonio Basto 8–10 ⓣ566866, ⓕ514083.** Sixty-four good-sized doubles, and six singles with fridge, a/c, video, TV and telephone. The decor may be old-fashioned and the wallpaper peeling, but the rooms are light and clean. MOP$300

Vila Nam Loon **Rua do Dr Pedro José Lobo 30 ⓣ712573.** Very clean and bright budget hotel; the rooms are so small that the beds almost fill them, but they have attached bathrooms. MOP$230

Royal **Estrada da Vitoria 2–4 ⓣ552222, ⓦwww.hotelroyal.com.mo.** An ageing but good-value high-rise, close to the Fortaleza da Guia. A ten-minute walk from Largo do Senado, it's well equipped, with standard and de luxe doubles, suites and a pool. MOP$680

Tin Tin Villa **Rua do Comandante Mate E Oliveira 17 ⓣ710064.** This small guesthouse offers cell-like but fairly clean, airy rooms with firm beds, some with their own bathroom. Cheap and well positioned, but no English spoken. a/c use costs an extra $10 per night. MOP$180

Central Macau

Central **Av. de Almeida Ribeiro 264 ⓣ373888.** One of Macau's oldest hotels, open since 1928, with hundreds of rooms on seven floors. Despite being a gloomy, elderly place, the location and en-suite rooms with TV make it fair value for money. MOP$160

Pensão Ka Va **Calcada de São João 5 ⓣ323063 or 329355.** Good budget choice on a lane running from the Sé to the upper end of Avenida Praia Grande, with 28 plain rooms with wooden shutters, en-suite bathroom, a/c and TV. Rear rooms are preferable to streetside ones, which can be noisy; a few are also prone to damp. MOP$150

Ko Wah **Floor 3, Rua Felicidade 71 ⓣ930755 or 375599.** Budget place accessed by lift from the cupboard-sized street lobby, with helpful management compensating for slightly threadbare furnishings – check a few rooms out, as some are much better than others. MOP$180

Man Va **Rua da Felicidade ⓣ388655, ⓕ342179.** A new hotel with clean, modern rooms; the bathrooms are spacious and the management helpful, though they don't speak English. Excellent value for money, and worth the slightly higher than usual tag for a guesthouse. MOP$300

Sun Sun **Praça Ponte e Horta 14–16 ⓣ939393, ⓕ938822.** Smart hotel where the upper floors have a view of the inner harbour. Inoffensively furnished rooms with TV and bath, and plenty of marble and wood in the lobby. MOP$600

Vila Universal

Rua Felicidade 73 ⓣ573247, ⓕ375602. Clean, basic rooms in this elderly guesthouse, priced according to size. MOP$150–190

Southern Macau

Pousada de São Tiago **Av. da República ⓣ378111, ⓦwww.saotiago.com.mo.** A gloriously preserved seventeenth-century fortress converted into an upmarket hotel with a swimming pool and terrace bar. Book well in advance for the weekend. MOP$1600, balconied rooms with views around MOP$300 extra

Taipa

The following are marked on the map on p.135.

Hyatt Regency **Estrada Almirante 2, Marques Esparteiro ⓣ831234, ⓦwww.macau.hyatt.com.** Just over the bridge from Macau (all the Taipa buses run past it), it's what you'd expect from the Hyatt chain: smart rooms, casino, landscaped swimming pool, attentive staff and a respected restaurant. MOP$1200

New Century

Av. Padre Tomás Pereira 889 ⓣ831111, ⓦwww.newcenturyhotel-macau.com. Enormous, five-star hotel across from the *Hyatt*, with similarly high-class levels of comfort. MOP$1200

Coloane

The following are marked on the map on p.135.

Pousada de Coloane **Praia de Cheoc Van ⓣ882143, ⓦwww.hotelpcoloane.com.mo.** A quirky hotel with 22 rooms,

each with its own terrace overlooking the beach tucked into Cheoc Van bay. The rooms on the top floor are enormous, with sofa, table and king-sized bed. Apart from its own Portuguese restaurant and a stretch of sand, there's not much else here, nor a bus or shuttle service – catch a cab. MOP$700

Westin Resort **Estrada de Hác Sá ⓣ871111, ⓦwww.westin.com/macau.** Set on Hác Sá's narrow beach, with a swathe of terraced rooms spread across the hillside. The hotel offers Macau's only 18-hole golf course, two pools and a Jacuzzi. All the modern, spacious rooms have up-to-date technology, comfortable beds, a terrace and beach or sea views. MOP$2100

Essentials

Arrival

The international **airports** in both Hong Kong and Macau are less than an hour on public transport from their respective city centres. The only other major arrival points are the Hong Kong-Macau **ferry terminals**, all of which are in the downtown areas.

By air

Hong Kong International Airport (Ⓦ www.hongkongairport.com) is located at Chek Lap Kok, 34km west of Hong Kong Island and just off the northern side of Lantau. The Airport Express train or **AEL** (around 6am–12.30am) runs every ten minutes from here via Tsing Yi (12min; HK$60) and Kowloon (20min; HK$90) to Central (23min, HK$100). Tickets are one-way only and can be bought with cash or credit cards from machines or customer service desks in the arrival halls.

Free shuttle buses (around 6am–11pm; 2–3 an hour) run from Kowloon and Hong Kong AEL stations to local hotels; you don't have to be staying at a hotel to use the service. **Airport buses** (6am–midnight) can take over an hour to get to town; they include the #A11, via Central and Wan Chai (every 15–25min; HK$40); the #A21 to Mong Kok, Yau Ma Tei and Tsim Sha Tsui (every 10min; HK$33); the #A31 to Tsuen Wan (every 15–20min; HK$17); and the #A41 to Sha Tin (every 15–20min; HK$20). There is also a skeleton service of **night buses** to all these destinations.

Taxis from the airport cost HK$300–350 into town, so it's cheaper than taking the AEL for a group of four, though there may be extra charges for luggage ($5 per piece) and for tunnel tolls to Hong Kong Island ($5–15 depending on the tunnel; drivers can legally request you pay the return toll too). **Helicopters** from Macau (East Asia Airlines, Ⓦ www.helihongkong.com) touch down at the Macau Ferry Terminal in Sheung Wan, Hong Kong Island, where there's a MTR station.

Macau International Airport (Ⓦ www.macau-airport.gov.mo) is located at the eastern side of Taipa Island, from where **airport bus** #AP1 (20min; MOP$3.30) meets all flights and runs to the Jetfoil Terminal and *Hotel Lisboa* on Avenida da Amizade; a **taxi** into town costs about MOP$40. **Helicopters** from Hong Kong (East Asia Airlines, Ⓦ www.helihongkong.com) arrive at the Jetfoil Terminal on Avenida da Amizade, a major bus and taxi terminus (see "By ferry" below).

By ferry

The **Hong Kong–Macau Ferry Terminal** in the Shun Tak Centre, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong Island, deals with arrivals from Macau. In the basement of the terminal is Sheung Wan MTR station, at the end of the blue Hong Kong Island line; change one stop along at Central for connections to Kowloon, Lantau and the airport.

Hong Kong's **China Ferry Terminal** is on Canton Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, and handles arrivals from various points along the nearby Chinese coastline, and from Macau. Tsim Sha Tsui MTR station is a ten- to fifteen-minute walk away on Nathan Road; a taxi is less stressful if you have luggage.

Macau's **Jetfoil Terminal** on Avenida da Amizade deals with all marine traffic from Hong Kong. From outside, buses #3, #3A, #10, #28A, #28B and #32 all go past the *Lisboa* (about a 5min ride); and the #10 or #10A run to Largo do Senado (about 10min). Buses run every few minutes, between approximately 6am and 11pm, and cost a flat MOP$2.50 for the city. A taxi into town costs around MOP$10.

Macau's **China Ferry Port** is at the Porto Interior on Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro, where a handful of daily ferries from Shenzhen dock. Bus #3A from here stops near Largo do Senado, at the *Lisboa*, and at the Jetfoil Terminal (15min).

Information

The **Hong Kong Tourism Board** (Ground Floor, The Centre, 99 Queen's Rd Central, Central ⓣ2508 1234, ⓦwww.hktb.com; daily 8am–8pm) are well informed about restaurants, accommodation, sights, tours and activities, as well as transport schedules; in addition, they organize free courses on *tai chi*, Cantonese opera, tea appreciation, pearl grading, and more, for which you need to sign up a day in advance. There should also be a branch office at the Star Ferry Pier in Kowloon, though the building was being renovated at the time of writing.

The Macau Government Tourist Office (daily 8am–7pm; ⓣ333000, ⓦwww.macautourism.gov.mo) offers a limited range of brochures and advice. The main offices are at the Jetfoil Terminal (daily 9am–10pm), and in the middle of Macau at Largo do Senado 9 (daily 9am–6pm). At their Hong Kong office (Macau Ferry Terminal, Shun Tak Tower, Connaught Rd, Central; daily 9am–1pm & 2.15–5.30pm; ⓣ2857 2287) you can usually get discounted rates for mid-range hotels prior to departure.

Websites

ⓦ**http://english.hongkong.com** An easy-to-use, concise site with handy snippets of information on everything in Hong Kong, from lifestyle through entertainment, travel and banking.

ⓦ**www.cityguide.gov.mo** Well laid-out site, with lots of illustrations of Macau and useful information such as transport timetables and phone numbers. Also some good ideas for walking tours.

ⓦ**www.scmp.com** The online edition of *The South China Morning Post*, Hong Kong's English-language daily, with a useful careers page, classified listings and news rundown. However, you can't read more than a snippet of the articles unless you subscribe.

ⓦ**www.ypmap.com/eng** Hong Kong's Yellow Pages site is excellent for finding anything from cinemas to shops and restaurants. You can search by street, business or building name, and it also lets you zoom in and search for bus and minibus routes.

City transport

Hong Kong has an excellently integrated public transport system. Underground and overground trains, trams, buses and ferries connect almost every part of the territory, and are cheap and simple to use. Macau's public transport is restricted to buses and taxis, but these are again efficient. Hong Kong tour operators also offer an easy way of seeing the highlights, or daytripping to Macau.

Chinese characters for all the sights mentioned in the text, along with some important streets, are given in the "Language" section on p.175–178 – point at them if you're having trouble communicating on public transport or when asking directions on the street.

Octopus Cards

For heavy public transport use in Hong Kong, buy an **Octopus Card**, a rechargeable ticket for travel on the MTR and KCR lines, the Airport Express (AEL), Light Rail, trams, most buses, most ferries and minibuses. The card costs an initial HK$150, comprising HK$100 useable value and HK$50 deposit (there's no refund if you return the card within three months, however). When it runs out you add credit at machines in rail stations or over the counter at any 7-Eleven store. The cards are available from MTR, AEL and KCR ticket offices. To use, scan them over sensors at the ticket gates.

Octopus also offers a **Tourist Pass** (HK$50), valid for 24 hours from the first time that you use it and allowing unlimited travel on the MTR (but not the AEL); and an **Airport Express Tourist Card** (HK$200/300 including a HK$50 refundable deposit) for use on the AEL (either single or return according to price) and 72 hours unlimited travel on the MTR after the first time you use it.

The MTR (Mass Transit Railway)

Hong Kong's speedy underground **MTR** (daily 6am–1am; trains every few min) has **five colour-coded lines** (see the colour map on the back flap of the book) which cover Hong Kong Island's north shore, much of Kowloon, and some parts of the New Territories, as well as Lantau. All signs and maps displayed in the system are in both Chinese and English.

Tickets cost between HK$4 and HK$26 for a one-way journey, and are only valid for ninety minutes. Ticket machines are on the station concourse – some don't give change and some only take coins; there's a HK$5000 fine for fare evasion.

The MTR is extremely crowded during **rush hour** (8–9.30am & 5.30–7pm) and is best avoided then if possible.

The KCR (Kowloon–Canton Railway)

Hong Kong's **KCR** (5.30am–1am; every 3–10min) serves the New Territories with three lines: **KCR East**, running via Sha Tin, Tai Po and Sheung Shui to the Chinese border at Lo Wu (you can only go as far as Sheung Shui without a Chinese visa); and the **Ma On Shan Line** and **KCR West**, which are of less use to visitors (see the colour map on the back flap of the book).

One-way **tickets** cost between HK$3.50 and HK$9 depending on the length of your journey, with a first-class compartment for double the standard fare. There's a HK$100 fine for fare evasion, or travelling first-class with an ordinary ticket.

Light Rail (LR)

Hong Kong's **Light Rail** is an electric, tram-like network linking the western New Territory towns. The only time visitors are likely to use it is to reach the Hong Kong International Wetland Park at Tin Shui Wai. Fares cost between HK$4 and HK$6 per journey.

Buses

Hong Kong's buses (6am–midnight; skeleton night bus service after midnight) cover just about every corner of the SAR. Each bus is marked with the destination in English and a number, along with a letter: "K" or "M" means that it links with a KCR or MTR station respectively; "R" buses only run on Sundays and public holidays; and "X" buses are express services with limited stops. **Fares** cost between HK$1.20 and HK$35 a trip – the amount is posted at bus stops and on the buses as you get on. Put the exact fare into the box by the driver; no change is given. For **route maps and timetables**, contact the Hong Kong Tourism Board (see p.160).

Macau's buses (7am–11pm; a few stop running earlier) operate on circular routes. **Fares** are MOP$2.50 for city routes, MOP$3.30 for Taipa and the airport, and MOP$4 for Coloane ($5 to Hác Sá). Pay the driver as you get on with the exact fare. The **main terminals** and bus stops are outside the Jetfoil Terminal; in front of the *Hotel Lisboa*; near the Maritime Museum and A-Ma Temple; and along Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro.

Trams

Double-decker **trams** (6am–1am) rattle along the north shore of Hong Kong Island, linking Western, Central, Wan Chai

and Causeway Bay; some detour around Happy Valley racecourse. You alight at the back and pay the flat HK$2 **fare** as you exit from the front. Destinations are marked on the front in English.

Ferries

Hong Kong's **cross-harbour ferries** (daily 6–7am until 7–11pm, depending on the service; every few min) link north-shore Hong Kong Island with Kowloon – they are suspended, though, in bad weather. The most famous vessel is the Star Ferry (see p.51) between Central and Tsim Sha Tsui, though there are several other vessels and alternative routes, including one between Wan Chai and Tsim Sha Tsui – see the colour map on the back flap of the book for routes.

Most **inter-island ferries** leave from the Outlying Islands Ferry Piers in front of the IFC2 tower in Central, with a few departing Tsim Sha Tsui's Star Ferry terminal – see island accounts on p.122, 127, 129 & 131 for details.

Taxis

Hong Kong's taxis are relatively cheap: HK$15 for the first 2km, then HK$1.40 per 200m, though there might be surcharges for carrying luggage, and using the cross-harbour tunnels. Cabs are colour-coded for region: red on Hong Kong Island and in Kowloon; green in the New Territories; and blue on Lantau. Cabs for hire display a red flag in the windscreen and an illuminated "Taxi" sign on the roof. Make sure the driver turns the meter on when you get in (though rip-offs are rare). Don't expect drivers to speak English, apart from the names of hotels and streets. If you get stuck, gesture to the driver to radio his control centre, and ask them to translate.

Macau's taxis are also inexpensive: MOP$10 for the first 1.5km, then MOP$1 for every 250m, plus MOP$3 for each piece of luggage. For Taipa and Coloane, there's a MOP$5 surcharge going out, but none for returning, and also a MOP$5 surcharge for airport pickups.

Tours

There are two main operators running **English-language tours** in Hong Kong: the Hong Kong Tourist Board (ⓦ www.hktb.com) and Gray Line Tours (ⓦ http://hongkong-tour.com). Both offer half- or full-day coach tours of Hong Kong Island and Kowloon (including sites such as Man Mo Temple, the Peak, Temple Street Night Market, Aberdeen harbour and Stanley Market) for $220–400; a half-day run around Lantau's main sights ($520); a quick peek at the downtown area for transit passengers ($200); heritage tours taking in temples, walled villages and traditional homes ($295); and ever-popular horseracing tours, which get you into the swanky members' enclosure for a buffet dinner and some racing tips (race days only, dress and minimum age rules apply; $550). Sunset harbour cruises with a seafood meal are $495, and they also offer a full-day tour to Macau ($690, or $720 at weekends).

The HKTB also offers several free short classes in *tai chi*, Chinese tea tasting and Cantonese opera appreciation – book with them at least a day in advance.

Communications

Hong Kong's post offices are open Monday to Friday between 9.30am and 5pm and Saturday from 9.30am to 1pm. The GPO is at 2 Connaught Place, Central, Hong Kong Island – poste restante will go here (collection Mon–Sat

Useful telephone numbers

Hong Kong
Directory enquiries (English): ⓣ1081
Emergencies: ⓣ999
Tourist information: ⓣ2508 1234
Calling Macau from Hong Kong: ⓣ001 + 853 + number.

Macau
Directory enquiries (Chinese and English): ⓣ181
Emergencies: ⓣ999
Tourist information: ⓣ333000 (8am–7pm)
Calling Hong Kong from Macau: ⓣ00 + 852 + number

8am–6pm); make sure you take your passport along. Airmail letters take around a week to reach Britain or North America.

Macau's GPO (Mon–Fri 9am–6pm, Sat 9am–1pm), where the poste restante mail is sent, is on Largo do Leal Senado; there's also a post office at the Jetfoil Terminal (Mon–Sat 10am–7pm). Letters to Europe and North America take the same time as from Hong Kong.

Phones

In Hong Kong, local calls from private phones are free. Public coinphones cost HK$1 for five minutes, and credit card phones considerably more. For overseas calls, buy **discount phone cards**: you dial an access number, enter a PIN supplied with the card, and then dial the overseas phone number; costs are just HK$1–2 per minute. The cards, sold in newsagents and small stores, are region-specific, so shop around until you find the right one.

In Macau, local calls are free from private phones, or MOP$1 from a payphone. For international calls, buy a **phonecard** (for use in most public phones) from the main post office, the Jetfoil Terminal, the airport or CTM shops.

For **mobiles** in either SAR, buying a local SIM card (with a new phone number) is the cheapest option, though some can't handle calls to the US or Canada.

Internet access

Hong Kong café chains, such as *Pacific Coffee Company*, have free Internet access for their customers. Libraries also have free Internet access, but you may have to wait in line. Business hotels and Net bars charge varying fees. **In Macau**, there are only a few Net bars – ask at the tourist office for their locations.

Entertainment

There's always something to do after dark in Hong Kong, though those after a "local culture" experience may be disappointed. Macau's entertainments are limited to gambling and eating.

For **listings**, try the free weeklies *HK Magazine* and *BC Magazine* (Ⓦ www.bcmagazine.net), available at Western-style bars, *Pacific Coffee Company* outlets and some bookshops; and the *South China Morning Post*'s *24/7* magazine, in the Friday edition of the paper. **Tickets** can be bought at venues, from HK Ticketing (daily 10am–8pm; ⓣ3128 8288, Ⓦ www.hkticketing.com/eng), or from URBTIX (ⓣ2111 5999, Ⓦ www.urbtix.gov.hk; bookings must be made at least seven days in advance).

Cantonese opera and folk performances

Cantonese opera is performed at festivals, on religious holidays and in some of Hong Kong's larger venues by professional troupes. Plots are based on well-known legends and stories, and the performances feature garish make-up, glass-cracking vocals and crashing percussion often bewildering to novices, though bouts of elaborate swordfighting and acrobatics are enjoyable. Other cultural shows include traditional **music**, **puppet theatre**, **folk dancing**, **acrobatics**, **magic** and **martial arts**. Street markets and festivals are good places to look for informal shows, or ask at tourist offices about big-venue performances.

Cinema

Despite a population of just seven million, Hong Kong has the world's third-largest **film industry** (after the US and India). Martial arts, police thrillers, slapstick comedy and romances are the main fare; few directors dabble in anything beyond light entertainment. **Cinemas** are multi-screen complexes showing a mixture of new Hollywood and local releases – check first that the performance is either in English or subtitled; tickets cost around $55 and are half-price on Tuesday.

Cine-Art House Sun Hung Kai Centre, 30 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai ☎2827 4820. Wan Chai MTR. Arty foreign films in two mini-cinemas.

Cinematheque Prosperous Garden, Public Square St, Yau Ma Tei ⓦwww.cinema.com.hk. Yau Ma Tei MTR. New domestic and Hollywood releases, plus slightly arty selection of world cinema classics.

Hong Kong Arts Centre 2 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai ☎2582 0200. Wan Chai MTR. Seasons of alternative and foreign films plus Chinese cinema.

JP Plaza 22–36 Paterson St, Causeway Bay ☎2881 5005. Causeway Bay MTR. Current releases at multiscreen complex.

New York Cinema 463–483 Lockhart Rd, Plaza II, Causeway Bay ☎2838 7380. Causeway Bay MTR. Plush cinema for new Western and Chinese releases.

Palace IFC Mall Central ⓦwww.cinema.com.hk. Central MTR. Flash twenty-screen complex showing current Western and local productions, plus themed seasons.

Silvercord Cnr Canton and Haiphong roads, Tsim Sha Tsui ☎2736 6218. Tsim Sha Tsui MTR. Two screens showing mostly local and Chinese productions, usually subtitled in English.

UA Times Square, Matheson St, Causeway Bay ☎2506 2822. Causeway Bay MTR. Inoffensive Hollywood, Hong Kong, Japanese and Korean releases for the children/teen market, usually subtitled.

Theatre and dance

Hong Kong has several domestic **theatre and dance groups**, and is visited regularly by international touring companies.

Venues

Academy for Performing Arts 1 Gloucester Rd, Wan Chai ☎2584 8500. Wan Chai MTR. Box office daily 10am–6pm. Six separate stages for local and international drama, along with modern and classical dance.

City Hall 1 Edinburgh Place, Central ☎2921 2840. Central MTR. Box office daily 10am–9.30pm. Drama, concerts, recitals, exhibitions and lectures.

Fringe Club 2 Lower Albert Rd, Central ☎2521 7251. Central MTR. Box office Mon–Sat 10am–10pm. Offbeat venue for cabaret, alternative theatre, jazz, concerts and poetry, as well as exhibitions, classes and workshops. Pick up the schedule from the venue.

Hong Kong Arts Centre 2 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai ☎2582 0200. Wan Chai MTR. Box office daily 10am–6pm. Local art, drama, concerts, film screenings, galleries and exhibitions.

Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre Expo Drive, Wan Chai ☎2582 8888. Wan Chai MTR. Major conventions, exhibitions, concerts and performances. Box office varies according to the promoter; check press for details.

Hong Kong Cultural Centre 10 Salisbury Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui ☎2734 2010. Tsim Sha Tsui MTR. Box office daily 10am–9.30pm. Dance, drama and concerts,

drawing on local and international performers. See p.94 for more details.

Queen Elizabeth Stadium 18 Oi Kwan Rd, Wan Chai ☎2591 1346. Wan Chai MTR. Box office daily 10am–6.30pm. Stadium with a 3500 capacity for large concerts and sports events.

Live music

Hong Kong's live music scene revolves around **Canto-pop**, a Chinese-language version of Western-style pop ballads. Output is phenomenal – many of the big names routinely record five or more albums per year – and its stars are accorded tremendous status. Live performances, where fans sit waving coloured light sticks and holding message boards for their heroes, sell out months in advance – book before you travel if you're hoping to catch one. Other than this, live music is centred on small club performances of jazz and Western rock and pop, though big names do play occasionally – check the press for details.

Traditional festivals

January/February

Chinese New Year (Spring Festival)
Celebrated for the first two weeks of the first month of the lunar calendar. Red and gold decorations, flower markets, lion and dragon dances and colossal fireworks displays in both Hong Kong and Macau set the tone. The best public spot to see Hong Kong's harbourside fireworks is at the bottom end of Nathan Road in Tsim Sha Tsui; in Macau it's by the lake on Avenida da Praia Grande – check local papers or tourist office websites for dates. Temples are packed out, too, and families get together to celebrate and eat special "lucky" New Year foods such as noodles (for long life), fish (because the Chinese word sounds the same as that for "surplus") and crescent dumplings (symbolizing wealth).

January/February

Yuen Siu (Spring Lantern Festival)
Marks the last day of the Chinese New Year (the fifteenth day of the first moon). Brightly coloured paper lanterns symbolizing the moon are hung in parks, shops, temples and houses. There's a second lantern festival in September; see "Mid-Autumn Festival". Good places to see elaborate arrangements are in Victoria and Kowloon parks in Hong Kong, and on the steps of São Paulo in Macau.

April

Ching Ming At the beginning of the third moon, this is also known as "Grave-sweeping day". Families place joss sticks, incense and food offerings (roast pork and fruit) at ancestral graves, while prayers are said for the departed souls and blessings sought for the latest generations of the family.

April/May

Tin Hau/A-Ma Festival Festival to honour the proctective goddess of the sea (known as Tin Hau in Hong Kong and as A-Ma in Macau), held on the 23rd day of the third lunar month. Fishing boats are colourfully decorated with flags, streamers and pennants, as fishermen and others who follow the goddess gather at Tin Hau temples (especially at Clearwater Bay) to ask for luck and to offer food, fruit and pink dumplings.

April/May

Tam Kung Festival Honouring another patron saint of fishermen on the eighth day

The lunar calendar

Chinese festival dates are fixed by the **lunar calendar**, which follows the phases of the moon and is therefore out of step with the Western, Gregorian calendar. For instance, the Chinese New Year begins on the first day of the first new moon of the year, which by the Gregorian calendar falls on a different day every year, at some point through January into mid-February. We've indicated the likely months that the following festivals will occur; check with the Hong Kong or Macau tourist offices for specific dates.

of the fourth lunar month, at the temple in Shau Kei Wan on Hong Kong Island.

April/May

Tai Chiu (Cheung Chau Bun) Festival A week-long extravaganza on Cheung Chau Island, with dances, operas, martial arts shows, parades, and towers of steamed buns, held to pacify the ghosts of those killed in former times by Cheung Chau's pirates. In deference to the religious nature of the event, no meat is served on the island during this time. The focus is Cheung Chau's Pak Tai Temple, and highlights are the afternoon "floating children" parade on the fifth day, and the scaling of the immense bun tower the following midnight by teams who compete to grab the most buns.

May

Buddha's birthday A low-key celebration when Buddha's statue is taken out of the various Buddhist monasteries and cleaned in scented water. Lantau's Po Lin monastery and 10,000 Buddha monastery at Sha Tin are the main venues.

June

Tuen Ng (Dragon Boat) Festival Commemorates statesman and poet Chu Yuen, who drowned himself in protest against a corrupt third-century BC government. Teams race in long, narrow boats with dragon-headed prows, and special packets of steamed rice are eaten. Venues include Tai Po, Aberdeen, Tai O on Lantau, and Sha Tin.

July

Birthday of Lu Pan Banquets held in honour of this sixth-century BC master carpenter, now patron of builders, on the thirteenth day of the sixth lunar month.

August

Maidens' Festival Observed on the seventh day of the seventh lunar month by young girls and lovers, who burn incense and paper and leave offerings of fruit and flowers. It takes place all over Hong Kong, but Amah Rock in the New Territories is an especial place of pilgrimage.

August

Yue Lan Festival Held on the fifteenth day of the seventh lunar month, when people burn paper models of food, cars, houses, money and furniture to deflect bad luck and appease "hungry ghosts", set free from hell for the day.

September

Mid-Autumn Festival Also called the Moon Cake Festival after the sweet cakes eaten at this time, and held on the fifteenth day of the eighth lunar month, this commemorates a fourteenth-century revolt against the Mongols. Varieties of moon cake (*yuek beng*) are stacked up in bakeries for the occasion, and there's a big lantern festival.

September

Birthday of Confucius Low-key religious ceremonies are held at the Confucius Temple in Causeway Bay.

October

Cheung Yeung Festival Ninth day of the ninth lunar month, when people climb hills in memory of a Han Dynasty man who took his family into the mountains to avoid a natural disaster.

Directory

Hong Kong

Airlines Aeroflot ⓣ2537 2611, ⓦwww.aeroflot.ru/eng; Air Canada ⓣ2867 8111, ⓦwww.aircanada.com; Air India ⓣ2522 1176, ⓦwww.airindia.com; Air New Zealand ⓣ2862 8988, ⓦwww.airnewzealand.com; British Airways ⓣ2822 9000, ⓦwww.britishairways.com; Cathay Pacific ⓣ2747 1888, ⓦwww.cathaypacific.com; China Eastern & China Southern ⓣ2861 0322, ⓦwww.ce-air.com, ⓦwww.cs-air.com;

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Dragonair ☎3193 3888, www.dragonair.com; Japan Airlines ☎2523 0081, www.jal.com; KLM ☎2808 2111, www.klm.com; Malaysia Airlines ☎2521 8181, www.malaysiaairlines.com; Qantas ☎2822 9000, www.qantas.com.au; Singapore Airlines ☎2520 2233, www.singaporeair.com; Thai International ☎2876 6888, www.thaiair.com; United Airlines ☎2810 4888, www.united.com.

Banks And Exchange Usually Mon–Fri 9am–4.30pm, Sat 9am–12.30pm. Banks mostly charge a variable commission for exchanging travellers' cheques. Licensed money-changers don't charge commission, but their exchange rates are usually lower than at a bank. In all cases, establish exact rates and fees before handing money over.

Consulates And Embassies Australia, 23rd Floor, Harbour Centre, 25 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai ☎2827 8881; Canada, 14th Floor, 1 Exchange Square, Central ☎2810 4321; China, 42 Kennedy Rd, Central ☎2106 6303; Ireland, 6th Floor, Chung Nam Building, 1 Lockhart Rd, Wan Chai ☎2527 4897; New Zealand, 6501 Central Plaza, 18 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai ☎2877 4488; South Africa, 2706 Great Eagle Centre, 23 Harbour Rd, Wan Chai ☎2577 3279; UK, 1 Supreme Court Rd, Admiralty ☎2901 3000; US, 26 Garden Rd, Central ☎2523 9011.

Dentists Listed in the Yellow Pages under "Dental Practitioners". The Hong Kong Dental Association (☎2528 5327) has a list of qualified dentists. Treatment is expensive.

Doctors Look in the Yellow Pages under "Physicians and Surgeons", or contact the reception desk in the larger hotels. Consultations average HK$400, plus any medicines prescribed.

Electricity Current is 200V AC. Plugs are generally the large, three square-pinned type used in the UK. Adaptors are sold at markets for about $5.

Emergencies ☎999 for fire, police or ambulance.

Government Bookshop 4th Floor, Murray Building, Garden Rd, Central (Mon–Fri 9am–5pm, Sat 9am–noon). Stocks maps of the islands, the New Territories hiking trails, and other useful publications.

Hospitals Non-residents pay around $3100 a day (with $19,000 deposit), though casualty visits are free. Princess Margaret Hospital, 2–10 Lai King Hill Rd, Lai Chi Kok, Kowloon ☎2990 1111; Queen Elizabeth Hospital, 30 Gascoigne Rd, Kowloon ☎2958 8428; Queen Mary Hospital, Pokfulam Rd, Hong Kong Island ☎2855 3838.

Laundry Most hotels and guesthouses offer (expensive) facilities. There are also laundries in most backstreets, charging by weight and taking a couple of hours.

Left Luggage At the airport (daily 6.30am–1am), and Central and Kowloon AEL stations. Guesthouses and hotels also look after luggage at individual rates.

Libraries Central Library, 66 Causeway Rd, facing Victoria Park in Causeway Bay (Mon–Wed 1–9pm, Thurs–Sun 10am–9pm; ☎3150 1234, www.hkpl.gov.hk). Internet access on every floor, an exhibition gallery, a toy library, stacks of comfortable sofas, a reference library and over four thousand periodicals and newspapers.

Lost Property Police ☎2860 2000; MTR, Admiralty Station (daily 11am–6pm); KCR, 8th Floor, KCR House, Sha Tin, New Territories ☎2606 9392 (Mon–Sat 9am–noon); Taxis ☎2385 8288.

Massage Golden Rock Acupressure and Massage Centre of the Blind, 8th Floor, Gold Swan Commercial Building, 438 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai (daily 10am–11.30pm; ☎2572 1322); Health Home Acupressure and Massage Centre for the Blind, Suite 1703, 397 Hennessy Rd, Wan Chai (daily 9am–11pm; ☎2838 6438). A one-hour session at either costs around $250.

Money The Hong Kong dollar (HK$) is divided into 100 cents (c). Coins come in 10, 20 and 50c denominations; notes as 20, 50, 100, 500 and HK$1000.

Newspapers Hong Kong's English-language papers are the party-line *South China Morning Post*; the business-oriented *Standard* and *Asian Wall Street Journal*; and the *International Herald Tribune*, with a US slant on the region.

Pharmacies Branches of Watson's and Manning's can be found all over Hong Kong.
Police The Police Headquarters is at Arsenal St, Wan Chai ☎2860 2000. For the Crime Hotline and taxi complaints, call ☎2527 7177; for complaints against the police, call ☎2866 7700.
Time Hong Kong is eight hours ahead of the UK (seven in summer), thirteen hours ahead of New York, sixteen hours ahead of Los Angeles and two hours behind Sydney.
Tipping In simple restaurants where there's no service charge, it's usual to leave a dollar or two (staff often give change from bills entirely in coins, hoping you'll leave it all). In taxis, make the fare up to the nearest dollar. Porters at upmarket hotels and at the airport require a tip – $10 is usually ample.
Travel Agents For Chinese visas, discounted hotel bookings, and deals on flights or tours; never hand over money until tickets are confirmed. China Travel Service (CTS; Mon–Fri 9am–7pm, Sat 9am–5pm, Sun 9am–12.30pm & 2–5pm; ⓦwww.chinatravel1.com), CTS House, 78–83 Connaught Rd, Central ☎2853 3533, Southorn Centre, Wan Chai ☎2832 3888 and Alpha House, 27–33 Nathan Rd (entrance in Peking Rd), Tsim Sha Tsui ☎2315 7124; Connaught Travel, 4th Floor, Chung Hing Commercial Building, 62 Connaught Rd, Central ☎2544 1531, ⓦwww.connaught-travel.com; Hong Kong Student Travel Ltd, Hang Lung Centre, Yee Wo St, Causeway Bay ☎2833 9909; Shoestring Travel, Alpha House, 27–33 Nathan Rd, Tsim Sha Tsui ☎2723 2306 (entrance on Peking Rd).

Macau

Airlines Air Macau ☎396 5555, ⓦwww.airmacau.com.mo; EVA Airways ⓦwww.evaair.com; Tiger Airways ⓦwww.tigerairways.com; Air Asia ⓦwww.airasia.com.

Banks And Exchange Generally open Mon–Fri 9am–5pm, Sat 9am–noon. Banks can mostly change traveller's cheques; ATMs can provide either MOP$ or HK$ as requested. Licensed money-changers (*casas de cambio*) give varying rates.
Doctors Go to the hospital casualty departments (see below) or look in the telephone directory Yellow Pages under "Médicos".
Electricity Mostly 220V, except for some older buildings at 110V. Plugs are three round-pin type.
Emergencies Call ☎999.
Hospitals There are 24-hour casualty departments at Centro Hospitalar Conde São Januário, Calç. Visconde São Januário (☎313731; English-speaking), and Hospital Kiang Wu, Est. Coelho do Amaral (☎371333; mostly Chinese-speaking).
Newspapers The *Macau Post* is the single English-language paper, giving a desperately thin roundup of international headlines. Hong Kong's newspapers are also available.
Pharmacies Farmácia Popular, Largo do Leal Senado 16 ☎573739; Farmácia Tsan Heng, Av. de Almeida Ribeiro 215 ☎572888; Farmácia Lap Kei, Calç. do Gaio 3D ☎590042; Farmácia Nova Cidade, Av. Barbosa, Centro Comercial ☎235812. Each takes it in turn to open around the clock; phone to see which.
Police The main police station is at Av. Dr Rodrigo Rodrigues ☎573333.
Taxis To order a taxi, call ☎519519 or 3988800.
Time Macau is eight hours ahead of GMT, thirteen hours ahead of New York, sixteen hours ahead of Los Angeles, and two hours behind Sydney.

Chronology

Hong Kong and Macau – A Chronology

4000BC: ▶ Hong Kong and Macau area inhabited by fishermen and farmers.

1279AD: ▶ Fleeing invading Mongol armies, China's last Song emperor dies during a naval battle off Hong Kong.

1368–1660: ▶ The Ming dynasty sees the first substantial settlement of Hong Kong and Macau by Han Chinese (China's dominant ethnic group).

1513–1612: ▶ The Portuguese explore the Pearl River Delta and are allowed by the Chinese government to settle the Macau peninsula as a hub for their expanding trade with Japan and Southeast Asia. The town takes shape in the early seventeenth century, when Jesuits fund the construction of the massive São Paulo Cathedral; forts are added from 1612 to repel the Dutch, who are attempting to muscle in on regional trade.

1639: ▶ Dutch intrigues get the Portuguese expelled from Japan; their trading network in Southeast Asia begins to unravel and Macau's fortunes go into a decline.

1750: ▶ British allowed to establish trading houses on the southern Chinese mainland at Guangzhou (Canton) city, ending all serious Portuguese influence in the area. The trade is entirely one-sided, however: the British buy Chinese tea and porcelain, but the Chinese find nothing of interest in British products.

c1790–1830: ▶ To redress the trade imbalance, the British begin to import Indian opium into China. Addiction and demand soar, reversing the flow of money in Britain's favour to the tune of eight million silver pieces a year.

1839: ▶ The Chinese authorities attempt to stem the drastic depletion of the country's financial reserves and end the opium trade by blockading the British warehouses, confiscating twenty thousand chests of the drug, and then publicly destroying them.

1840–42: ▶ The First Opium War. Infuriated by China's actions, Britain sends gunboats to shell cities along the Chinese coast. Britain takes Hong Kong Island in 1841, and the Treaty of Nanking in 1842 concludes the war by allowing the British to establish trading enclaves in Chinese cities.

1846–47: ▶ Taipa annexed by Macau's Portuguese governor, who also legalizes gambling to increase revenue.

1856–60: The Second Opium War. British resume gunboat diplomacy to demand greater trading rights in China, and are ceded the Kowloon Peninsula at the Convention of Peking.

1860–80: ▶ Uprisings in China against the failing Qing Dynasty see 150,000 refugees fleeing into Hong Kong. The settlement expands to become a financial and trading centre, with its focus along the north shore of Hong Kong Island.

1887: ▶ China cedes sovereignty of Macau to Portugal.

1898: ▶ The New Territories are leased to Britain for 99 years. It is the expiry of this lease, and the impossibility of the rest of Hong Kong existing without the New Territories, that forces Britain to return the whole of Hong Kong to China in 1997.

1907: ▶ Britain ends the Chinese opium trade.

1920–41: ▶ Shanghai's rising importance to international trade with China sees Hong Kong's fortunes wobble; from 1933, refugees pour into Hong Kong and Macau as Japan invades China.

1941–45: ▶ The Japanese occupy Hong Kong for most of World War II; following the Japanese surrender, the British resume control after a brief attempt to make it an international state.

1949–1960s: ▶ As the Communists seize power in mainland China, more refugees flee into Hong Kong and Macau. Hong Kong's population reaches 2.5 million, necessitating the first government housing projects to replace squalid "squatter settlements" caused by the population boom. The problem intensifies further after the Cultural Revolution begins in China in 1964, and the mainland degenerates into near-anarchy.

1973–80: ▶ Tuen Mun, Hong Kong's first New Town, opens. The Cultural Revolution fizzles out, and trade with China increases.

1984: ▶ Sino-British Joint Declaration signed, agreeing to hand back Hong Kong after the New Territories' lease expires. Hong Kong is to keep its capitalist system for fifty years as a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China under a "One Country, Two Systems" model.

1985–97: ▶ Hong Kong's economy booms, and competitive architecture blossoms along Hong Kong Island's north shore. However, the 1989 Tiananmen Square massacre in Beijing causes concern over whether China will be similarly brutal with any post-handover dissent in Hong Kong.

1987: ▶ Portugal and China agree on the return of Macau in 1999 as a SAR.

1997: ▶ Hong Kong handed back to China; shipping magnate Tung Chee-hwa becomes the SAR's first Chief Executive. Although the handover itself is peaceful, the Asian financial crisis begins a few days later and regional currencies collapse, causing recession and soaring unemployment.

1999: ▶ Macau returned to China.

2003: ▶ SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) kills 299 in Hong Kong; tourist industry crashes.

2005–07: ▶ Tung Chee-hwa resigns in disgrace in 2005 after mishandling Hong Kong's economy, and is replaced by civil servant Donald Tsang. Tsang proves to be a neutral character, keen to build ties with China and establish a period of economic stability in the SAR.

Language

Language

Hong Kong and Macau's primary language is Cantonese, a southern Chinese dialect. Cantonese is tonal, meaning that the specific tone with which a word is spoken affects its meaning; mispronounce the tone, and the effects are similar to mispronouncing a vowel in English – anything from the wrong meaning to gibberish (for instance, "tall" coming out as "tell", "till", "toll" or "tull"). Cantonese has nine tones (Mandarin, China's main dialect, has just four), so the opportunities for error are substantial.

Using language in Hong Kong and Macau

Chinese characters embody meanings rather than pronunciation, so it's not necessary to learn to speak Chinese in order to read it. This is like written numerals in the West: the symbol "2" means the same thing in England, Spain and Finland, irrespective of local pronounciation. However, there are over 10,000 Chinese characters, although far fewer are in daily usage – you need around 2500 to read a newspaper. While this is beyond the scope of a short stay, you might learn to recognize enough to get the gist of dishes on a menu.

English is widely spoken in Hong Kong, though outside the downtown areas you might find speakers thin on the ground. Portuguese, officially Macau's second language, is actually little used except on signs and in the names of local dishes.

Included below are lists of the sights covered in this book, some useful words and a menu reader, all with the corresponding Chinese characters – show taxi drivers, passers-by or waiters if English doesn't work. Cantonese pronounciation is not given, as the system for indicating tones requires prior knowledge of the language to use. A Portuguese menu reader and some useful words for Macau are also included.

Sightseeing

Hong Kong

Places

香港仔	Aberdeen
金鐘	Admiralty
鴨脷洲	Ap Lei Chau
新娘潭	Bride's Pool
銅鑼灣	Causeway Bay
中環	Central
長洲	Cheung Chau
長沙	Cheung Sha
清水灣	Clearwater Bay
鑽石山	Diamond Hill
愉景灣	Discovery Bay
分流	Fan Lou
跑馬地	Happy Valley

香港	Hong Kong
香港島	Hong Kong Island
佐敦	Jordan
大廟灣	Joss House Bay
錦田	Kam Tin
橋咀洲	Kiu Tsui Chau
九龍	Kowloon
九龍城	Kowloon City
南丫島	Lamma Island
蘭桂坊	Lan Kwai Fong
大嶼山	Lantau Island
鳳凰山	Lantau Peak
麥理浩徑	MacLehose Trail
米埔濕地	Mai Po Marshes
馬料水（渡輪碼頭）	Ma Liu Shui (Ferry Pier)
模達灣	Mo Tat Wan
梅窩	Mui Wo
新界	New Territories
北潭涌	Pak Tam Chung
坪洲	Peng Chau
船灣郊野公園	Plover Cove Country Park
貝澳	Pui O
淺水灣	Repulse Bay
西貢	Sai Kung
沙田	Sha Tin
筲箕灣	Shau Kei Wan
石澳	Shek O
上水	Sheung Shui
上環	Sheung Wan
索罟灣	Sok Kwu Wan
赤柱	Stanley
沙頭角海	Starling Inlet
大浪灣	Tai Long Wan
大尾督	Tai Mei Tuk
大帽山郊野公園	Tai Mo Shan Country Park
大澳	Tai O
太平山	Tai Ping Shan
大埔	Tai Po
大埔墟	Tai Po Market
大圍	Tai Wai
塔門洲	Tap Mun Chau
天后	Tin Hau
天水圍	Tin Shui Wai
尖沙咀	Tsim Sha Tsui
尖沙咀東	Tsim Sha Tsui East
荃灣	Tsuen Wan
屯門	Tuen Mun
東涌	Tung Chung
灣仔	Wan Chai
黃石	Wong Shek
黃大仙	Wong Tai Sin
油麻地	Yau Ma Tei
榕樹灣	Yung Shue Wan

Sights

中國銀行大廈	Bank of China
天壇大佛	Big Buddha
園圃街雀鳥花園	Bird Market
中環廣場	Central Plaza
長江實業中心	The Centre
車公廟	Che Kung Temple
志蓮淨苑	Chi Lin Nunnery
清水灣鄉村俱樂部	Clearwater Bay Country Club
鐘樓	Clocktower
香港會議展覽中心	Convention and Exhibition Centre
香港迪士尼樂園	Disneyland
交易廣場	Exchange Square
花墟	Flower Market
金魚街	Goldfish Market
跑馬地墳場	Happy Valley Cemeteries
跑馬地馬場	Happy Valley Racecourse
海港城	Harbour City
香港上海匯豐銀行大廈	Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank
香港藝術中心	Hong Kong Arts Centre
香港文化中心	Hong Kong Cultural Centre
香港文花博物館	Hong Kong Heritage Museum
香港海防博物館	Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence
香港公園	Hong Kong Park
香港鐵路博物館	Hong Kong Railway Museum
香港濕地公園	Hong Kong Wetlands Park
國際金融中心二期	IFC2
玉器市場	Jade Market
吉慶圍圍村	Kat Hing Wai Walled Village
九龍公園	Kowloon Park
九龍寨城公園	Kowloon Walled City Park
女人街	Ladies' Market
李鄭屋漢墓	Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum
力寶中心	Lippo Centre
獅子山（郊野公園）	Lion Rock (Country Park)
廖萬石堂	Liu Man Shek Tong Ancestral Hall
香港文華東方酒店	Mandarin Oriental Hotel

文武廟	Man Mo Temple
香港藝術館	Museum of Art
香港歷史博物館	Museum of History
香港醫學博物館	Museum of Medical Sciences
新城市廣場商場	New Town Plaza
午砲	Noon Day Gun
海洋中心	Ocean Centre
香港海洋公園	Ocean Park
北帝廟	Pak Tai Temple
八仙嶺郊野公園	Pat Sin Leng Country Park
山頂	The Peak
半島酒店	The Peninsula Hotel
寶蓮寺	Po Lin Monastery
荃灣三棟屋博物館	Sam Tung Uk Museum
香港科學館	Science Museum
沙田跑馬場	Sha Tin Racecourse
石壁水塘	Shek Pik Reservoir
水頭村圍村	Shui Tau Tsuen Walled Village
水月宮	Shui Yuat Temple
香港太空館	Space Museum
渣打銀行	Standard Chartered Bank
皇后像廣場	Statue Square
廟街夜市	Temple Street Night Market
萬佛寺	Ten Thousand Buddhas Monastery
時代廣場	Times Square
天后 廟	Tin Hau Temple
修道院	Trappist Monastery
曾大屋圍村	Tsang Tai Uk Walled Village
東涌炮台	Tung Chung Fort
香大博物館	University Museum and Art Gallery
維多利亞公園	Victoria Park
西港城	Western Market
黃大仙廟	Wong Tai Sin Temple
香港動植物公園	Zoological and Botanical Gardens

Streets

界限街	Boundary Street
寶雲道	Bowen Road
廣東道	Canton Road
德輔道	Des Voeux Road
告士打道	Gloucester Road
加連威老街	Granville Road
軒尼詩道	Hennessy Road
荷李活道	Hollywood Road
蘭桂坊	Lan Kwai Fong
駱克道	Lockhart Road
彌敦道	Nathan Road
皇后大道	Queen's Road

Transport

巴士站	bus stop
赤鱲角飛場	Hong Kong International Airport
中港碼頭	China Ferry Terminal
九廣鐵路車站	KCR station
輕便鐵路車站	LR station
纜車總站	Lower Peak Tram Terminal
港澳碼頭	Macau Ferry Terminal
地下鐵車站	MTR station
港外線碼頭	Outlying Islands Ferry Pier
天星碼頭	Star Ferry Pier

Macau

Places

媽閣	Barra
路環	Coloane
澳門	Macau
外港	Porto Exterior
內港	Porto Interior
氹仔	Taipa

Sights

媽祖閣	A-Ma Temple
氹仔住宅式博物館	Casa Museu
基督教墳場	Cemitério Protestante
竹灣	Cheoc Van
路環市區	Coloane Village
東望洋山堡壘	Fortaleza da Guia
大炮台	Fortaleza do Monte
松山	Guia Hill
黑沙海灘	Hác Sá Beach
康公廟	Hong Kung Temple
葡京酒店	Hotel Lisboa
嘉模聖母教堂教堂	Igreja do Carmo
回力球娛樂場	Jai-Alai Casino

盧廉若公園	Jardim Lou Lim Ieoc
白鴿巢賈梅士花園	Jardim Luís de Camões
觀音像	Kun Iam Statue
觀音堂	Kun Iam Temple
議事亭前地	Largo do Senado
議事亭	Leal Senado
澳門文化中心	Macau Cultural Centre
澳門博物館	Museu de Macau
海事博物館	Museu Maritimo
北帝廟	Pak Tai Temple
石排灣郊野公園	Parque de Seac Pai Van
主教山教堂	Penha Chapel
聖地牙哥	Pousada de São Tiago
路環聖方濟各教堂	St Francis Xavier Chapel
仁慈堂大樓	Santa Casa de Misericórdia
聖母玫瑰堂	São Domingos
大三巴牌坊	São Paulo
大堂	Sé
氹仔舊城區	Taipa Village
天后古廟	Tin Hau Temple
旅遊活動中心	Tourist Activity Centre

Streets

友誼大馬路	Avenida da Amizade
民國大馬路	Avenida da Republica
新馬路	Avenida de Almeida Ribeiro
南灣大馬路	Praia Grande
龍嵩正街	Rua Central
福隆新街	Rua da Felicidade
草堆街	Rua das Estalagens
十月初五街	Rua de Cinco de Outubro
河邊新街	Rua do Almirante Sergio
板樟堂街	Rua Sul do Mercado de São Domingos

Transport

蛇口碼頭	China Ferry Terminal
港澳碼頭	Jetfoil Terminal
澳門機場	Macau Airport

Useful words

Some Cantonese signs

入口	Entrance
出口	Exit
廁所	Toilets
男廁	Gentlemen
女廁	Ladies
營業中	Open
休業	Closed
到達	Arrivals
出發	Departures
休假	Closed for holidays
出故障	Out of order
礦泉水	Drinking/mineral water
請勿吸菸	No smoking
危險	Danger
關稅	Customs
公共汽車	Bus
渡船	Ferry
火車	Train
飛機場	Airport
警察	Police
飯店	Restaurant
賓館	Hotel
野營位置	Campsite
海灘	Beach
禁止游泳	No swimming

Some Portuguese words

Alfandega	Customs
Avenida	Avenue
Baia	Bay
Beco	Alley
Bilheteira	Ticket office
Calçada	Alley
Correios	Post office
Edificio	Building
Estrada	Road
Farmácia	Pharmacy
Farol	Lighthouse
Fortaleza	Fortress
Hospedaria	Guesthouse
Jardim	Garden
Largo	Square
Lavabos	Toilets
Mercado	Market
Museu	Museum
Pensão	Guesthouse
Ponte	Bridge
Pousada	Inn/Hotel

Praça	Square	**Travessa**	Lane
Praia	Beach	**Vila**	Guesthouse
Rua	Street		
Sé	Cathedral		

Hong Kong menu reader

General

我食齋	I'm vegetarian
餐牌/英文餐牌	Menu/English menu
筷子	Chopsticks
刀/叉/匙羹	Knife/fork/spoon
理單	Bill/cheque

Drinks

啤酒	Beer
齋啡	Coffee
(礦泉）水	(Mineral) Water
葡萄酒	Wine
白酒	Spirits
豆漿	Soya milk

Teas

茶	Tea
紅茶	Black tea
綠茶	Green tea
鐵觀音茶	"Iron Buddha"
香片茶	Jasmine
普洱茶	Bo lei
苦茶	Medicinal tea
五花茶	Five-flower
甘四味茶	Twenty-four flavour

Staple foods

竹筍	Bamboo shoots
芽菜	Bean sprouts
豆角	Beans
牛肉	Beef
牛肉丸	Beef ball
豆豉醬	Black bean sauce
幾	Chicken
辣椒	Chilli
芥蘭	Chinese broccoli
菜心	Chinese greens
蟹	Crab
青瓜	Cucumber
鴨	Duck
鰻	Eel
魚	Fish
蒜頭	Garlic
薑	Ginger
鵝	Goose
青椒	Green pepper (capsicum)
羊肉	Lamb
味精	MSG
磨菇	Mushrooms
麵條	Noodles
蠔油	Oyster sauce
白鴿	Pigeon
豬肉	Pork
大蝦	Prawns
蝦丸	Prawn balls
河粉	Rice noodles
粥	Rice porridge (aka "congee")
白飯	Rice, boiled
鹽	Salt
芝麻油	Sesame oil
湯	Soup
豉油	Soy sauce
魷魚	Squid
糖	Sugar
豆腐	Tofu/Beancurd
醋	Vinegar
馬蹄	Water chestnuts
白蘿卜	White radish

Cooking methods

焙	Casseroled
沙鍋	Claypot/sandpot
煮	Boiled
炒	Fried
白煮	Poached
烤	Roast
蒸	Steamed
清炒	Stir-fried

Main Dishes

叉燒（飯）	Barbecued pork (on rice)
豆腐湯	Beancurd soup
牛肉丸湯	Beef ball soup
炖鴨素菜	Braised duck with vegetables
客家豆腐	Casseroled beancurd stuffed with pork mince
玉米幾絲湯	Chicken and sweetcorn soup

Dim sum menu reader

Savouries

Steamed prawn dumplings	蝦餃
Steamed beef-ball	牛肉丸
Steamed spare ribs in spicy sauce	排骨
Steamed pork and prawn dumpling	燒麥
Steamed bun stuffed with barbecued pork	叉燒包
Gelatinous rice-flour roll stuffed with shrimp/meat	長粉
Steamed glutinous rice filled with assorted meat, wrapped in a lotus leaf	糯米雞
Deep-fried stuffed dumpling served with sweet and sour sauce	餛飩
Half-moon-shaped steamed dumpling with meat/shrimp	粉角
Congee (thick rice gruel, flavoured with shredded meat and spring onion)	春卷
Spring roll	羅蔔糕
Turnip cake	鳳爪
Chicken feet	釀豆腐
Stuffed beancurd	
Taro/yam croquette	蕃薯糊角
Crabmeat dumplings	蟹肉角
Shark's fin dumplings	魚鰭餃
Curried squid	咖喱魷魚
Steamed, sliced chicken wrapped in beancurd	雞絲粉卷
Fried, stuffed green pepper	釀青椒
Deep-fried beancurd roll with pork/shrimp	鮮春卷
Steamed dumpling with pork and chicken	豬肉雞水餃
Steamed chicken bun	雞包仔
Barbecued pork puff	叉燒酥
Mixed meat croquette	咸水角

Sweets

Water-chestnut cake	馬蹄糕
Sweet beancurd with almond soup	豆腐花
Sweet coconut balls	糯米池
Steamed sponge cake	馬來糕
Mango pudding	芒果布丁
Sweet lotus-seed paste bun	蓮蓉糕
Egg-custard tart	蛋撻

筍尖嫩玉米炒幾片	Chicken with bamboo shoots and babycorn
堅果幾片	Chicken with cashew nuts
蠔油芥蘭	Chinese broccoli in oyster sauce
沙鍋腊腸飯	Claypot rice with sweet sausage
豉汁焗蟹	Crab with black beans
脆皮肉(飯)	Crisp-skinned pork (on rice)
蛋炒飯	Egg fried rice
魚丸湯	Fish ball soup
焙魚	Fish casserole
清蒸魚	Fish steamed with ginger and spring onion
豆腐素菜	Fried beancurd with vegetables
炒豆芽	Fried bean sprouts
檸檬幾	Lemon chicken
羅漢齋	Monks' vegetables (stir-fry of vegetables and fungi)
湯麵	Noodle soup
蒜頭炒蝦	Prawn with garlic sauce
烤鴨(飯)	Roast duck (on rice)
烤鵝	Roast goose
客家鹽幾	Salt-baked chicken
黃豆肉片	Sliced pork with yellow bean sauce
豆豉青椒炒魷魚	Squid with green pepper and black beans
豆豉蒸鰻	Steamed eel with black beans
清炒竹筍	Stir-fried bamboo shoots
筍尖炒幾片	Stir-fried chicken and bamboo shoots
糖醋排骨	Sweet and sour spare ribs
素菜湯	Vegetable soup
餛飩湯	Wonton soup

Macau menu reader

Basics and snacks

Arroz	Rice
Batatas fritas	French fries
Legumes	Vegetables
Manteiga	Butter
Omeleta	Omelette
Ovos	Eggs
Pimenta	Pepper
Prego	Steak roll
Sal	Salt
Salada mista	Mixed salad
Sandes	Sandwiches

Meat

Almondegas	Meatballs
Bife	Steak
Chouriço	Spicy sausage
Coelho	Rabbit
Cordoniz	Quail
Costeleta	Chop, cutlet
Dobrada	Tripe
Figado	Liver
Galinha	Chicken
Pombo	Pigeon
Porco	Pork
Salsicha	Sausage

Fish and seafood

Ameijoas	Clams
Bacalhau	Dried, salted cod
Camarões	Shrimp
Carangueijo	Crab
Gambas	Prawns
Linguado	Sole
Lulas	Squid
Meixilhões	Mussels
Pescada	Hake
Sardinhas	Sardines

Soups

Caldo verde	Green cabbage and potato soup, often served with spicy sausage
Sopa álentejana	Garlic and bread soup with a poached egg
Sopa de mariscos	Shellfish soup
Sopa de peixe	Fish soup

Cooking terms

Assado	Roasted
Cozido	Boiled, stewed
Frito	Fried
Grelhado	Grilled
No forno	Baked

Specialities

Camarões	Huge grilled prawns with chillies and peppers
Cataplana	Seafood with bacon, sausage and peppers
Cozido á Portuguesa	Boiled casserole of mixed meats, rice and vegetables
Galinha á Africana (African chicken)	Chicken baked with peppers and chillies
Galinha á Portuguesa	Chicken baked with eggs, potatoes, onion and saffron in a curry sauce
Feijoada	Rich stew of beans, pork, sausage and vegetables
Pasteis de bacalhau	Cod fishcakes, deep-fried
Porco á álentejana	Pork and clams in a stew
Pudim flán	Crème caramel
Arroz doce	Portuguese rice pudding

Drinks

Água mineral	Mineral water
Café	Coffee
Chá	Tea
Cerveja	Beer
Sumo de laranja	Orange juice
Vinho tinto	Red wine
Vinho branco	White wine
Vinho do Porto	Port (both red and white)
Vinho verde	young wine, slightly sparkling and refreshing; usually white.
Almoço	Lunch
Comidas	Meals
Jantar	Dinner
Prato dia/Menu do dia	Dish/menu of the day

Glossary

AEL Airport Express Line, running between Hong Kong Island, Kowloon and Chep Lap Kok airport.
A-Ma see "Tin Hau".
Amah Maid
Ancestral hall Temple hall where ancestral records and shrines are kept.
Dim sum Cantonese-style breakfast made up of a selection of small soups, dumplings and special dishes, served with tea. Also known as *yum cha*.
Feng shui The belief that the arrangement of local landscape affects an area or building's "luck".
Gweilo European, foreigner
Hakka Chinese ethnic group who live in distinctive clan villages.
Handover The formal handing back of Hong Kong by Britain to China in 1997.
HKTB Hong Kong Tourism Bureau.
HSBC Hong Kong & Shanghai Bank.
IFC2 International Finance Centre, Tower 2 – Hong Kong's tallest building.
Kaido Small ferry, running only on demand.
KCR Kowloon–Canton Railway. Three-branch railway running through the New Territories.
Kun Iam See "Kwun Yam".
Kwun Yam The Chinese Boddhisatva of Mercy, especially prayed to by women wanting children or safe childbirth.
Mainland China, excepting Hong Kong and Macau.
MTR Mass Transit Railway – Hong Kong's subway or tube.
New Territories The area of Hong Kong between Kowloon and the Chinese border.
New Towns Self-contained satellite towns spread across the New Territories, designed to decentralise Hong Kong's urban population.

Pastelaria Macanese sweet/savouries shop specialising in almond biscuits, peanut brittle and roast meats.

SAR Special Administrative Region of China, hence "Hong Kong SAR" and "Macau SAR". Though technically controlled by the Chinese government, SARs enjoy considerably more local autonomy and freedoms than is permitted on the mainland.

SARS Severe Acute Respiritory Syndrome, a virus originating in China which killed 299 people in Hong Kong, in 2003.

Tin Hau Sea goddess and protector of fishermen; known as A-Ma in Macau.

Triad Organised crime gang, similar to the Mafia.

Yum cha see "dim sum".

small print & Index

A Rough Guide to Rough Guides

In 1981, Mark Ellingham, a recent graduate in English from Bristol University, was travelling in Greece on a tiny budget and couldn't find the right guidebook. With a group of friends he wrote his own guide, combining a contemporary, journalistic style with a practical approach to travellers' needs. That first Rough Guide was a student scheme that became a publishing phenomenon. Today, Rough Guides include recommendations from shoestring to luxury and cover hundreds of destinations around the globe, including almost every country in the Americas and Europe, more than half of Africa and most of Asia and Australasia. Millions of readers relish Rough Guides' wit and inquisitiveness as much as their enthusiastic, critical approach and value-for-money ethos. The guides' ever-growing team of authors and photographers is spread all over the world.

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Help us update

We've gone to a lot of effort to ensure that the first edition of **Hong Kong & Macau DIRECTIONS** is accurate and up-to-date. However, things change – places get "discovered", opening hours are notoriously fickle, restaurants and rooms raise prices or lower standards. If you feel we've got it wrong or left something out, we'd like to know, and if you can remember the address, the price, the phone number, so much the better.

We'll credit all contributions, and send a copy of the next edition (or any other DIRECTIONS guide or Rough Guide if you prefer) for the best letters. Everyone who writes to us and isn't already a subscriber will receive a copy of our full-colour thrice-yearly newsletter. Please mark letters: "**Hong Kong & Macau DIRECTIONS Update**" and send to: Rough Guides, 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, or Rough Guides, 4th Floor, 345 Hudson St, New York, NY 10014. Or send an email to **mail@roughguides.com**

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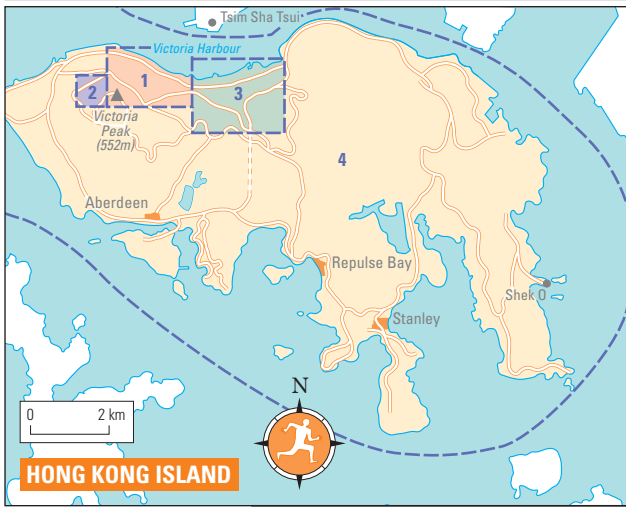

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HONG KONG ISLAND
Chai Wan

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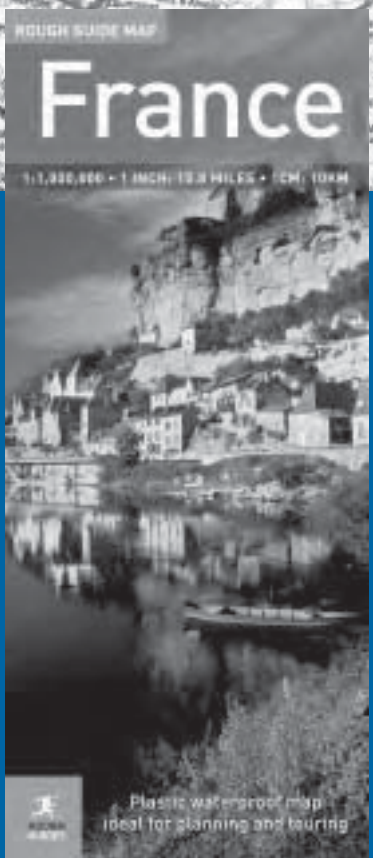

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